Feb. 20, 1978

THE NEW YORKER

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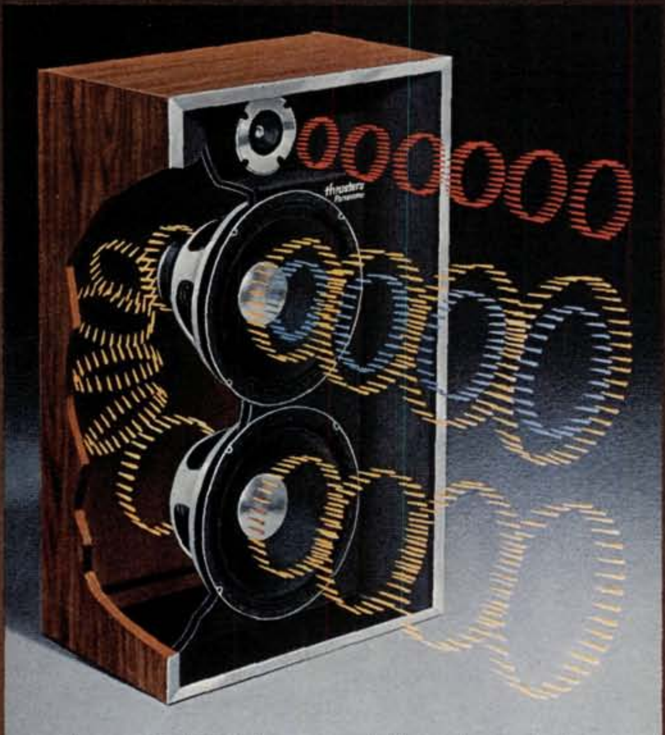

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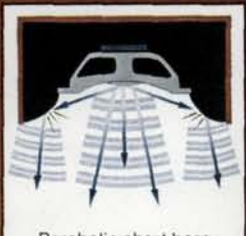

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25

THE THEATRE

(Next week, some theatres, as indicated below, will rearrange their schedules because of the Washington's Birthday holiday, which will be observed on Monday, Feb. 20. There may be further changes, so it would be wise to check with the newspapers before making plans.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

THE ACT—Liza Minnelli in a vehicle that, though designed to accommodate her youthful talents, creaks like a one-hoss shay. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

CHAPTER TWO—A writer lacerated by memories of a beloved dead wife and by the presence of a beloved new wife, intensely alive. The author, Neil Simon, makes a lot of jokes in the course of telling this sad story. The four-person cast is admirable. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-2412. Nightly, except Sundays and Monday, Feb. 20, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 3.)

COLD STORAGE—Two men are dying of cancer in a New York hospital. In spite of the subject matter, the play is often humorous as well as enthralling, thanks in part to the fact that it was written by Ronald Ribman and in part to the performances given by Martin Balsam and Len Cariou. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. JU 2-3897. Tuesdays, except Feb. 21, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 3.)

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE—George Rose is the best Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne ever in this revival of Shaw's comedy about the American Revolution and other matters, and Carole Shelley is very good—and funny, too—as the ardent Mrs. Anderson. The play is the first of four to be presented this season by the invaluable BAM Theatre Company. Frank Dunlop directed. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Feb. 19.)

DRACULA—Frank Langella and a splendid company in a charming adaptation of the Bram Stoker novel. With marvellous sets and costumes by Edward Gorey. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

EQUITY LIBRARY THEATRE—A revival of Ted Tiller's mystery-comedy COUNT DRACULA (also based on the Bram Stoker novel) will be the fifth in this season's series of eight productions. (And the twenty-ninth or thirty-sixth of this season's Draculas.) Preview Wednesday, Feb. 15. Opens officially on Thursday, Feb. 16, and will run through Sunday, Feb. 26. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

THE GIN GAME—Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn in a new comedy about the horrors of old age. Harsh, but at the same time extremely funny. The playwright is D. L. Coburn. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 246-6742. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

GOLDA—A dull play, but Anne Bancroft is dazzling in the title role. (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 19.)

A LIFE IN THE THEATRE—David Mamet's loving tribute to the theatre in the form of a collage of the offstage conversations between a seasoned actor and a younger one, and of their onstage dialogues in brief parodies of every conceivable kind of scene. The play is very funny and subtly haunting as well. With Ellis Rabb and Peter Evans as the actors. Gerald Gutierrez was the estimable director, and John Lee Beatty the estimable scenic designer. (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

LULU—A revival of Frank Wedekind's play, adapted from his plays "Earth Spirit" and "Pandora's Box." Trish Hawkins, Jack Davidson, and William Hurt head the cast. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE MANDRAKE—Wilford Leach has worked up a stunning production of the rowdy old comedy by Niccolò Machiavelli. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

MY ASTONISHING SELF—Selections from the writings of Bernard Shaw, as delivered in character by Donal Donnelly. Mr. Donnelly, a capable actor, is only an indifferent impersonator, but G.B.S. is, as always, good company. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY—Two plays by Gus Edwards, directed by Douglas Turner Ward, alternating weekly—BLACK BODY BLUES is a melodrama—unfortunately, a rather empty one—about a gentle black man, the prostitute he lives with, and his dangerous, criminal brother. With Samm-Art Williams in the leading role. Through Sunday, Feb. 19. . . . THE OFFERING: An old man, who years ago moved out of Harlem to the West Side; a younger man, once an apprentice of his and now a professional killer; the wife of the first; and the white girl friend of the second—these are the characters in Mr. Edwards' taut, often threatening (and sometimes funny) drama of sexual urgency and rivalry. The play is fascinating, and the acting, by Mr. Ward, Charles Weldon, Olivia Williams, and Katherine Knowles, is entirely worthy of it. Tuesday through Sunday, Feb. 21-26. (St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. OR 4-3530. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Mati-

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DRAWINGS: *James Stevenson, Charles Addams, Barney Tobey, Warren Miller, Chon Day, Stan Hunt, Mischa Richter, Frank Modell, Lee Lorenz, Whitney Darrow, Jr., Dana Fradon, George Price, William Steig, Marc, Charles Saxon, George Booth, James Mulligan, Joseph Farris, Sam Gross, Robert Weber, Edward Frascino*

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25 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036
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THE NEW YORKER, published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036; Peter F. Fleischmann, chairman; George J. Green, president; William P. Buxton, Milton Greenstein, and Sam R. Spoto, vice-presidents; J. Kennard Bosee, treasurer; Elaine M. Matteo, secretary. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 155 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif. 94104; 523 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90014; 1175 Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta, Ga. 30361; 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116; 21 Grosvenor St., London, WIX OED. Vol. LIV, No. 1, February 20, 1978. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1978 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $20.00; two years, $35.00. In Canada and Mexico, one year, $22.00. Other foreign, $26.00.

"I thought seeing Italy would teach me more about my father. Instead it taught me more about myself."

Carolyn Berger, Philadelphia, Pa.

"My maiden name is Aquino. A very common name in the town of Monte Fredane, where my father was born. He left there almost 100 years ago, in the steerage section of a boat, to start a new life in America.

"Recently, I went to Italy to visit his hometown. My father's house is still standing. (It's home now to another family.) I visited the church where my father was baptized and was able to see the record of his birth in the Town Hall. You see, the Monte Fredane I saw is very much the same as the one my father left so many years ago.

"Even with a background of hardship and coming to a strange new land, my father and mother managed to raise 12 children. Sometimes with an iron hand. But always with love.

"There were many times that my father and I didn't agree. And many times that I didn't understand his ways. But now I do.

"What formed his personality was the land he left. And through him, the memory of that same land formed mine."

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nées Saturdays at 3:30 and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 5.)

On the Twentieth Century—A musical (taken from the 1932 play and the 1934 film) with a book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, a score by Cy Coleman, and a cast that is headed by Madeline Kahn, John Cullum, and Imogene Coca. Directed by Harold Prince. Previews through Saturday, Feb. 18. Opens officially on Sunday, Feb. 19. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Nightly at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Othello—Earle Hyman gives a performance of great distinction as the Moor, but there is almost no one to catch his fire in this pedestrian production. With Carmen de Lavallade as Emilia, and Nicholas Kepros as Iago. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Feb. 19; will reopen March 1.)

The Passion of Dracula—Christoper Bernau makes an effective, menacing Count, and Giulia Pagano is good, too, as the object of his predatory affections in this unpretentious, entertaining adaptation (in the British manner) of Bram Stoker's old thriller. Bob Hall and David Richmond are the adapters. Peter Bennett is the commendable director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

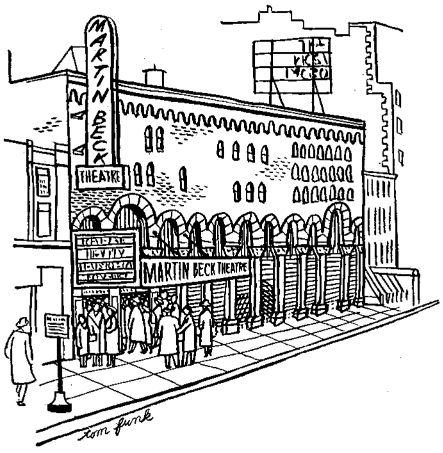
Paul Robeson—A long-winded documentary account of the life of the great singer-athlete-actor. James Earl Jones impersonates Robeson; the text is by Phillip Hayes Dean. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 26.)

A Prayer for My Daughter—The events of this evocative, fascinating play, by Thomas Babe, take place at a police station on the night when a homosexual guru and his junkie disciple are pulled in for a murder, and when the daughter of the sergeant in charge threatens suicide. The atmosphere of the precinct house at a time of emotional crisis is as convincing and pervasive as that of the rock scene in Mr. Babe's "Kid Champion," and the acting, under Robert Allan Ackerman's direction, is exceptionally good. The actors are Jeffrey De Munn, Alan Rosenberg, Laurence Luckinbill, and George Dzundza. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Saint Joan—Lynn Redgrave is a sturdy and valiant, if not very thrilling, Joan in this workmanlike production of the Shaw play, in which Shaw proves to his satisfaction that the Church was right to let Joan burn, and that Joan was right not to give up faith in her voices. (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 19.)

Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act and Scenes from Soweto—A pair of one-acters. "Statements," the most recent of Athol Fugard's strong, affecting plays dealing with the inhuman racial predicament in present-day South Africa, is about the clandestine (and illegal) love affair of a "colored" school principal and a white librarian, and it is very well acted by Robert Christian and Veronica Castang. "Scenes," by Steve Wilmer, which suffers somewhat by comparison, tells of a black South African who returns to Johannesburg from Oxford, is caught up in the racial riots and eventually murdered by the police. Again, Mr. Christian is splendid as the hero, and John Vennema does as well as possible playing the white men in his life, all of them setups. Direction by Thomas Bullard. (Manhattan Theatre Club, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Wednesdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 5.)

The Tennis Game—An evocation, in words, music, and movement, of the behavior and conversational styles of the smart set during three eras. The show is described as a work in progress, but when George W. S. Trow, the playwright, is at his best—as in the opening scene, in Newport—he sounds like a fantastical Saki. The production is exquisite—staging by Timothy Mayer, music by William Schimmel, and movement by Peter Lobdell. With Linda Hunt, Leora Dana, and Jon Huberth, among other good actors. (Theatre of the Open Eye, 316 E. 88th St. Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 15-16, at 8, and Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18, at 7 and 9. For tickets, call 369-4660.)



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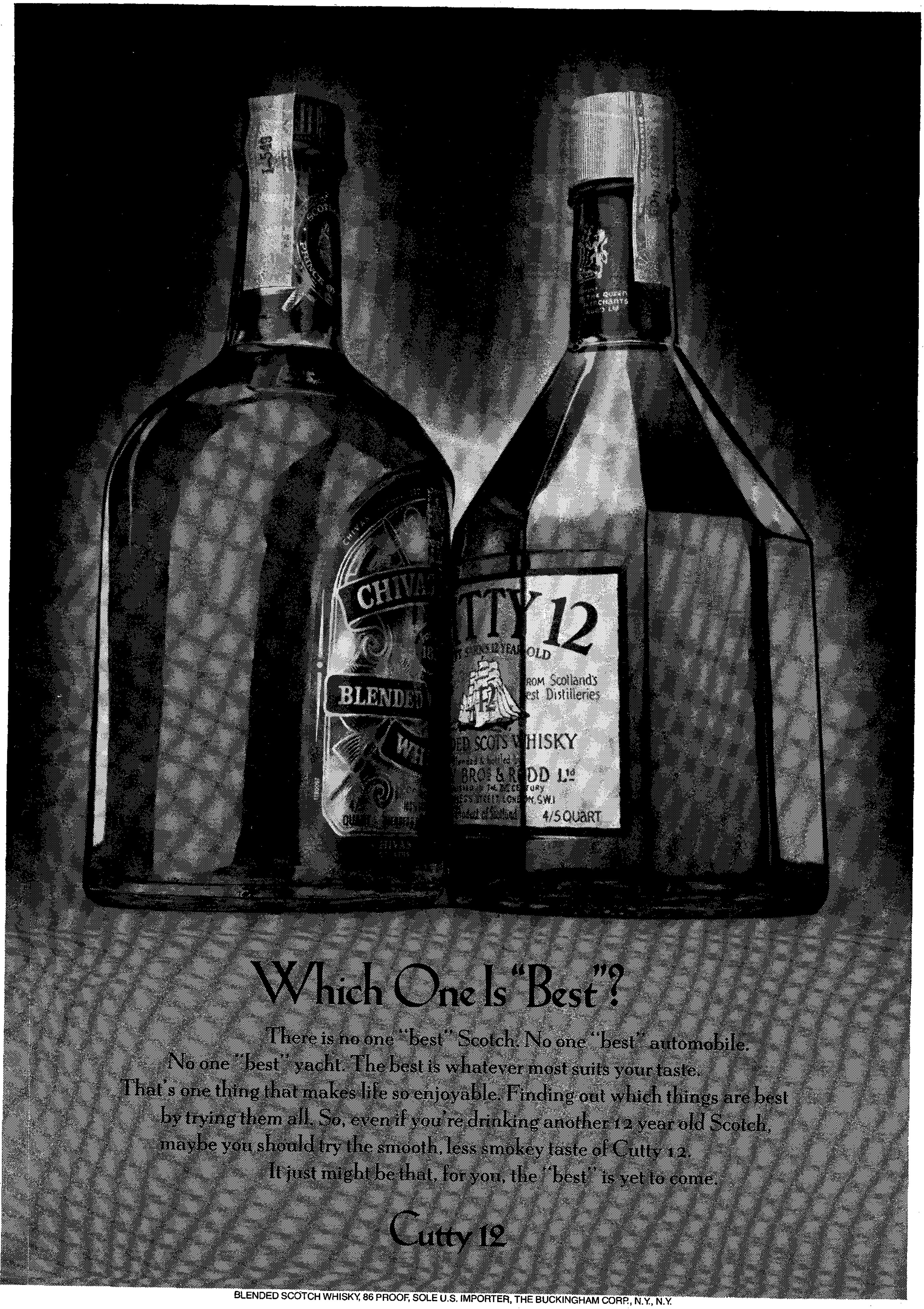
A Touch of the Poet—Jason Robards, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Milo O'Shea, and Kathryn Walker in an implausible O'Neill melodrama about a drunken Irish major and his family. The time purports to be the eighteen-twenties, and the place purports to be near Boston, but it is all yallery-greenery O'Neillery. (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Nightly, except Sundays and Monday, Feb. 20, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20.)

Long Runs—**ANNIE:** An old-fashioned musical, based on the once popular comic strip "Little Orphan Annie." The agreeable book is by Thomas Meehan, and the so-so songs are by Charles Strouse and Martin Charnin. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. A brilliant, innovative musical, conceived, choreographed, and directed by Michael Bennett. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **THE CLUB:** Eve Merriam's musical entertainment is set in a gentlemen's club in 1903, but the company consists of seven women, lightly disguised in top hats, white tie, and tails, who sing and dance to authentic, indelicate songs of the period. As feminist projects go, this one is unusually good-humored, and the singing, and especially the dancing, under Tommy Tune's direction, is proficient and pleasing. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **THE FANTASTICKS:** 7,400 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)... **FOR COLORED GIRLS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE:** The marvellous poems and prose of the American writer Ntozake Shange are spoken and danced to by seven remarkably gifted young black women. The director, Oz Scott, must be given high credit for the captivating result. Choreography by Paula Moss. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 2 and 5.)... **GEMINI:** In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social, but is actually sexual. With Danny Aiello as the father and Jonathan Hadary, among other good actors. Peter Mark Schifter directed. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **GREASE:** A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée for the Actors' Fund Monday, Feb. 20, at 3.)... **I LOVE MY WIFE:** A rather simple-minded little study of attempted wife-swapping in Trenton, New Jersey. Some lively songs by Cy Coleman, and some lively performances, especially by Lenny Baker. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 246-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Feb. 22, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 3.)... **THE KING AND I:** The Rodgers and Hammerstein success of twenty-six years ago. Yul Brynner is better than ever as the King—and what songs! (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **THE MAGIC SHOW:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.)... **MUMMENSCHANZ:** A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising, and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Tuesdays, except Feb. 21, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 2.)... **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20.)... **SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR:** A comedy as neatly put together as a Cartier watch and with scarcely more heart. Betsy Palmer and Monte Markham are the cast. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, Thursdays, and Monday, Feb. 20, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 3.)... **SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM:** An excellent display of Sondheim songs, with Nancy Dussault, Larry Kert, Georgia Brown, and Hermione Gingold. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 2 and 8; Thursday and Friday, Feb. 16-17, at 8; and Saturday, Feb. 18, at 2 and 8. Moves on Wednesday, Feb. 22, to the Morosco, 217 W. 45th St., 246-6230, where performances will be given nightly, except Sundays and Tuesdays, at 8, with matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **SLY FOX:** Vincent Gardenia, Jack Gilford, James Gallery, and John Heffernan, all in rip-roaring farcical high spirits. The author is Larry Gelbart, standing on the shoulders of rare Ben Jonson. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 19.)... **VANITIES:** In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. Garland Wright directed the attractive performance. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)... **THE WIZ:** A black musical version of that well-remembered movie "The Wizard of Oz." The stars of the occasion are Tom H. John, who did the sets, and Geoffrey Holder, who did the costumes and also directed the show. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-7260. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays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MISCELLANY

Beatlemania—A multimedia and live-music production about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Wednesdays through Fridays at 7, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5; special matinée Monday, Feb. 20, at 2.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Performances of "Don Quixote" will close out the season. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Thursday and Friday, Feb. 16-17, at 8; Saturday, Feb. 18, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Feb. 19, at 1 and 7.)

Dance Umbrella—A five-week season by nine contemporary dance companies which will end Sunday, March 19. **LOUIS FALCO DANCE COMPANY**: Wednesday through Saturday evenings, Feb. 15-18, and Sunday matinée and evening, Feb. 19. . . . **MINI UMBRELLA**: Remy Charlip, and Andy deGroat and Alan Lloyd/Dancers and Musicians, Saturday matinées, Feb. 18 and 25. . . . **RACHEL LAMPERT AND DANCERS**: Tuesday evening, Feb. 21; Thursday and Friday evenings, Feb. 23-24; and Sunday evening, Feb. 26. . . . **MAY O'DONNELL CONCERT DANCE COMPANY**: Wednesday evening, Feb. 22; Saturday evening, Feb. 25; and Sunday matinée, Feb. 26. (Entermedia, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 475-4191. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Manuel Alum—A program of solo works. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Wednesday, Feb. 15, and Friday, Feb. 17, at 8, and Saturday, Feb. 19, at 5.)

Les Ballets Jazz—A brief engagement by this company from Montreal, appearing here for the first time. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7; Wednesday through Friday, Feb. 22-24, at 8; Saturday, Feb. 25, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Feb. 26, at 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

●

Michael Renzi (Carnegie Hall Cabaret, 165 W. 56th St. PL 7-9522. Mondays through Fridays from seven to eleven.)—The principal attraction here is not the place (the old Carnegie Tavern, refurbished but looking glum, with its mirrors and dark panelling), nor Renzi (a thirty-five-year-old Providence pianist, classically and jazz trained in Boston), but the piano. It is a brand-new gleaming black six-foot August Förster from East Germany, and it is the only one in this country. Its tone is brilliant. The lower register has bite and depth and enormous strength, and the upper octaves, instead of being merely crystalline, are belling and round. The instrument has a carved-mahogany sound, a John Townsend cabriole sound. But its beauty is insidious, for it plays its player, making whatever he does seem imperishable. This is not to say that Renzi is insignificant. He moved to New York from Boston recently, and he is a graceful, delicate performer, whose slow ballads are particularly effective, and whose single-note melodic lines are easy and purposeful. His repertory has surprises, and a set is apt to include not only Puccini (the chorus at the end of the first act of "Turandot") but Harold Arlen's "A Sleepin' Bee," Irving Berlin's "Change Partners," and Cole Porter's "Why Shouldn't I" and "I Concentrate on You." The August Förster is owned by Gil Wiest—the proprietor here, and also of Michael's Pub—who should rent Carnegie Hall some evening, roll his A. F. onstage, and see what it played.

●

Ali's Alley, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—Many of the best contemporary post-hard-bop and new-jazz musicians are booked into these sympathetic quarters. Pianist Al Dailey heads a quartet through Saturday, Feb. 18; on Tuesday, Feb. 21, trumpeter Ahmed Abdullah will bring in a septet that will include tenor saxophonist Chico Freeman. On Mondays, trumpeter and flugelhornist Ted Daniel leads Energy, an occasionally gangly, often free-form, and nearly always accessible fourteen-piece band. Music from about ten. Closed Sundays.

Ballroom, 458 West Broadway, between Houston and Prince Sts. (673-9121)—A cabaret that, with its white walls, white slatted-back chairs, white Formica tables, and pale-blue ceiling, is as light and airy as a breakfast room. The current attraction is "By Strouse," a mini-revue put together by composer Charles Strouse, who scored "Annie," "Applause," and "Bye Bye Birdie." Donna Marshall, Gary Beach, Maureen Moore, and Gail Nelson sing Mr. Strouse's tunes. Shows Tuesdays through Sundays at eight-thirty and ten-thirty. Dinner.

Bar None, 167 E. 33rd St. (684-3223)—Sort of thirties chophouse. The pianist **DARDANELLE** is on hand from seven, Tuesdays through Saturdays. Her playing is genteel Tatum, but her singing is pure, effortless, and delightful.

Beefsteak Charlie's, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-4720)—Situated amid the high-rise dorms of New York University, the pleasantly relaxed cocktail lounge of this restaurant lures in good players. **AIR**—saxophonist and hubcap percussionist **HENRY THREADGILL**, drummer **STEVE MC CALL**, and bassist **FRED HOPKINS**—winds up a four-night visit on Saturday, Feb. 18. Wednesday through Saturday, Feb. 22-25, altoist **LEE KONITZ** will lead a trio. Music from nine until two Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Over thirty years ago, **MUDDY WATERS** arrived in Chicago and began playing on an electric guitar the rural blues he had learned in the Delta from Son House. The resulting product, Chicago blues, hasn't changed much since then, and, fortunately, neither has Waters. He'll be here on Wednesday, Feb. 15. On Thursday, Feb. 16, Richie Havens, who used to be a Village folk fixture, will be present; on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18, the South African pianist **DOLLAR BRAND** will perform, opposite singer Patti Austin; Sunday and Monday, Feb. 19-20, jazz-rock drummer Billy Cobham will bring in his latest group; on Tuesday, Feb. 21, the Horslips, an Irish rock combo, will trade sets with Billy Connolly, a Scottish folk humorist; on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 22-23, singer Yvonne Elliman will alternate with Billy Falcon's Burning Rose rock band; and on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, the Alessi rock band will be here, opposite singer Karon Bihari. Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dinner.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—An attractive little bar where business *always* seems to be booming. Pianist and house favorite **JIMMY ROWLES** is here with bassist **RED MITCHELL** on Wednesday, Feb. 15, and with another bassist for a week beginning Sunday, Feb. 19. Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 16-18, pianist **JOHN BUNCH** will work with Red Mitchell. Music from ten most nights, from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dinner.

DANGER
SLIPPERY
ROAD AHEAD

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—In the Café Carlyle, **GEORGE SHEARING**, the piano stylist and, lately, a breathy vocalist, too, is substituting for Bobby Short while B. S. takes his midwinter leave of absence. "Lullaby of Birdland" and other tunes Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-forty-five and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one. Dinner and supper. . . . **TEDDY WILSON**, as elegant, understated, and swinging as ever, is back in the Bemelmans Bar Mondays through Saturdays from nine-thirty to one.

Carnegie Hall Cabaret, 165 W. 56th St. (PL 7-9522)—**MICHAEL RENZI** (see above) is here Mondays through Fridays from seven to eleven. Dinner.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Punk-rock bands on the bandstand; punk-rock-band entourages in the audience—an interesting jumble of torn T-shirts, dirty sneakers, rear-guard platform shoes, jeans, feathered boas, slicked-down hair, leather, and a wholesome flannel shirt or two. Monday is showcase night. The music usually begins after nine-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—The legendary blues singer **ALBERTA HUNTER**, who is funny, rocking, and altogether charming, is singing "Downhearted Blues," which she wrote in 1922, and "I Want a Two-Fisted, Double-Jointed, Rough-and-Ready Man," which she wrote in 1976. She works Mondays through Saturdays. Sundays: **ROSE MURPHY**. For whatever reasons, she performs within a ring of tricks, but behind them is a shrewd, swinging singer and an excellent Earl Hines pianist. Music from eight to one. Dining.

Crawdaddy, Vanderbilt Ave. at 45th St. (687-1860)—**BUCK CLAYTON**, one of the stars of the Count Basie band in the thirties and forties, is starring here with a trio Mondays through Fridays from six-thirty to eleven-thirty. The room flanks 45th Street and has ceiling fans, a tile floor, high-backed Windsor chairs, and food with a New Orleans tinge. Closed Saturdays and Sundays.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The audiences are largely characterized by coats and ties and cigars, and they come here (and to Jimmy Ryan's, just thirty paces west) to hear traditional small-band jazz. The house band, which begins weeknights after nine-thirty, is a low-keyed and controlled sextet headed by bassist-proprietor Red Balaban. On Tuesday, Feb. 21, trumpeter Chris Griffin will sit in with the regulars. On Sunday, Feb. 19, guitarist Chris Flory will lead a quintet from eight-thirty. Dinner.

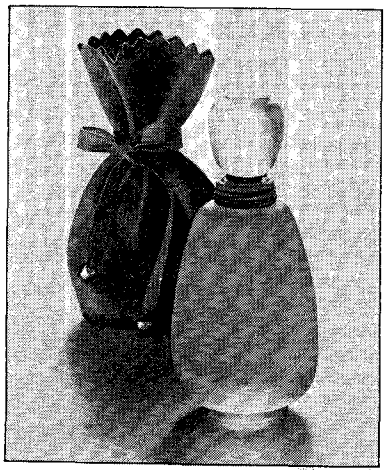
Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Pianist **HOD O'BRIEN**, guitarist **JOE PUMA**, and the sparkling bassist **FRANK LUTHER** play standards and O'Brien compositions, and they also support conscientious vocal work by Alicia Sherman. They're here Wednesdays through Saturdays from ten to three, and on Sundays from seven to three. Mondays from ten belong to pianist **AL HAIG**, guitarist **EDDIE DIEHL**, and bassist **JAMIL NASSER**; Tuesdays from ten are claimed by guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE**, bassist Nasser, and pianist Bill Triglia. Weeknights, Gene Roland, Jim Watkins, and Morris Edwards hold sessions from seven to ten.

Hopper's, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—Pianist Monty Alexander's quartet finishes up on Saturday, Feb. 18; on Monday, Feb. 20, Laurindo Almeida, the Brazilian classical guitarist and popularizer, whose repertoire straddles the classics, pop, jazz, and some of his Hollywood scores, will move in with a trio. Mondays through Thursdays, at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, and on Fridays and Saturdays, at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one. No music Sundays.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**ROY ELDRIDGE** is buoyed by the resident blowers—pianist Johnny Morris, drummer Ernie Hackett, clarinettist Joe Muranyi, bassist Ted Sturgis, and trombonist Bobby Pratt. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Larson's, 1160 Third Ave., at 68th St. (744-2540)—**BROOKS KERR**, the young stride pianist and Ellington admirer, is back in action, along

© 1978 Estée Lauder, Inc. Photograph: Skrebneski Clothes: Richard Assatly Dolls: Boyer Antiques & Doll Shop, New Orleans



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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with trumpeter **FRANC WILLIAMS** and bassist **AARON BELL**, both genuine Ellington exes. **SHELTON GARY** is their drummer. The quartet performs Thursdays through Saturdays; Kerr and Bell team up with drummer **SONNY GREER** on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Music from nine to one. Dinner and supper.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—The tight voicings and complex, jumping improvisations of **JACKIE CAIN** and **ROY KRAL** are being devoted to an evening of songs having to do with Humphrey Bogart, that most unmusical of actors. Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—An often crowded upper West Side contemporary-music hangout that mostly features rhythm and blues. Music from ten to three. Dinner.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—A reformed coffeehouse: tables and chairs instead of benches; Perrier and even headier stuff instead of ice cream and tea. Canadian folkie Dan Hill alternates with comedian Gary Yudman on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 15-16; on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18, singer Peter Hammill will perform; on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 22-23, folksinger and composer **TOM PAXTON**, whose decade-old protest songs are still worth listening to, will be present; and on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, guitarist George Thorogood will bring in his band. Shows Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays, at nine and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays, at nine and midnight.

Peter Brown, 168 W. 96th St. (866-4710)—A spiffy room with recessed ceiling lights, smoked-glass partitions, brown tweed carpeting, and a few potted dracaenae. Trumpeter and flugelhornist **DANNY MOORE**, who is impressive when he goes for the upper registers of his flugelhorn, is in charge of a fine quintet—pianist **HAROLD MABERN**, saxophonist **FRANK STROZIER**, bassist **CALVIN HILL**, and drummer **LOUIS HAYES**—Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 16-18. Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 23-25, singer Harold Dumont and his band will take over. Music Thursdays through Saturdays from ten. Dinner.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—**BOBBY ROSENGARDEN** and his orchestra handle the music chores in Art Deco City Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining and dancing.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—Singer and actress **ANDREA MARCOVICCI'S** voice is deep, rich, and subtle, and her repertoire—"Life on Mars," by David Bowie; "You Don't Know Me," an Eddie Arnold relic from the fifties; "The Lover's Latin Lament," by Bruce Roberts; "Drift Away," a well-preserved six-year-old rock standard—is flawlessly paced. She's here through Sunday, Feb. 19. Tuesday through Saturday, Feb. 21-25, singer Mercedes Hall will be onstage. Shows at nine and midnight most nights; one show, at nine-thirty, on Sundays. **BLOSSOM DEARIE** sings and accompanies herself on the piano Wednesdays through Saturdays from six to seven-thirty. Dinner.

Stryker's, 103 W. 86th St., at Columbus Ave. (874-8754)—On Mondays, bassist **CHUCK ISRAELS** leads a lively, boiled-down version (nine pieces) of his National Jazz Ensemble, and he's got some first-rate soloists—**JIMMY KNEPPER, TOM HARRELL,** and **GERRY NIEWOOD**. And, between Israels and drummer **JOE LA BARBARA**, the rhythm section is absolutely inspirational. On Wednesday, Feb. 15, alto saxophonist **LEE KONITZ**, always worth hearing, will direct *his* nonet; on Thursday, Feb. 16, singer Judy Niemach will work with her band; and on Wednesday, Feb. 22, trombonist and composer **JIMMY KNEPPER** will head a quartet. Music from nine-thirty.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled jazz room with the kind of informal coziness you'd expect to find in Aspen. Saxophonist **JOE FARRELL'S** quintet performs through Saturday, Feb. 18; on Sunday and Monday, Feb. 19-20, trumpeter Marvin Stamm will emerge from the recording studio long enough to lead a quartet; and Tuesday through Saturday, Feb. 21-25; a quintet comprising guitarist Joe Beck, saxophonist David Sanborn, bassist Herb Bushler, pianist Kenny Ascher, and drummer Idris Muhammed will be on hand. Music from nine-thirty. Dinner.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN**, guitarist **EDDIE BERG**, and bassist **LISLE ATKINSON** collaborate on Thursdays in the ground-floor bar area from ten to midnight. Downstairs, Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18, flutist Herbie Mann and his sextet, the Family of Mann, will perform; on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, the master, **DIZZY GILLESPIE**, will bring in his current group. Shows at ten and midnight. On Mondays, at eight-thirty and ten-thirty, a jazz-rock organization called Turning Point takes charge. Meanwhile, in the Top of the Gate, upstairs, Bob January leads a fifteen-piece swing band on Sundays from seven to eleven. Dinner and dancing in this room.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—The air quality in this world-famous jazz institution is unacceptable, but go anyway. **SONNY FORTUNE**, the driving, hard-edged alto saxophonist who makes one positively grateful for long, extended solos, leads his quintet through Sunday, Feb. 19; on Tuesday, Feb. 21, drummer **LOUIS HAYES** will descend the stairs with his quartet. On Mondays, the **THAD JONES-MEL LEWIS** big band steams right along. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—A soul-food *boîte* with a friendly staff, hundreds of gold Christmas ornaments hanging (year round) from the ceiling, a near-impenetrable layer of sawdust on the floor, and some glowing piano-bass duos. Mondays through Wednesdays are assigned to pianist Sonelius Smith, who plays "Nature Boy," "Over the Rainbow," Red Garland's version of "Billy Boy," and other selections in a tongue-in-cheek variety of overlapping styles—he can coast like a cocktail pianist or noodle like Keith Jarrett or attack like Cecil Taylor. Harris Simon has the Thursday-through-Sunday shift at the keyboard. Music begins at eight.

West End Café, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A hangout for students and aging swing musicians who can still swing. Tenor saxophonist George Kelly's Jazz Sultans perform through Sunday, Feb. 19; on Tuesday, Feb. 21, the **COUNTSMEN—DICKY WELLS, EARLE WARREN, DILL JONES, FRANKLIN SKEETE,** and **JO JONES, JR.**—will move in. Music from nine most nights; beginning at eight on Monday, Feb. 20, Earle Warren will play rare records and comment on them. Student food at student prices.

W.P.A., 152 Spring St., near West Broadway, (226-3444)—A friendly bar and candlelit back-room restaurant in beautiful downtown SoHo. But don't expect an evening of artist-watching—most of the patrons look strictly from uptown. Pianist **HAROLD DANKO** is here, usually with bassist **CHUCK ISRAELS**, Tuesdays through Saturdays. **JILL MC MANUS**, an animated Wynton Kelly-inspired pianist, works on Sundays. Music from nine.

DISCOTHÈQUES

Ipanema, 240 W. 52nd St. (765-8025)—A Plexiglas dance floor over colored lights. Live Latin music on Tuesdays from six; recorded disco music from nine on Fridays and Saturdays, and recorded disco and Brazilian music from nine on Sundays. Closed Mondays and Wednesdays.

New York, New York, 33 W. 52nd St. (245-2400)—A lighting man and a licensed laser officer are in charge of the special effects: laser beams projected onto a screen; moving, spinning colored spotlights; and a fog machine. From ten nightly.

Régine's, 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (826-0990)—An Art Deco interior carried out in tones of aubergine and silver. Dancing from ten-thirty. Dinner. Closed Sundays.

Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (489-7667)—This place was built in 1927 as the Fortune Opera House; now it accommodates large numbers of dancers. From ten. Closed Mondays. (Many private parties are held here; therefore, the nights on which the facilities are open to the public may vary.)

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Interludes—The third offering in a varied series of hour-long performances at Town Hall (JU 2-4536) will be by **CISSY HOUSTON** on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 5:45.

Sea Level, Elvin Bishop, and Eddie Money—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Friday, Feb. 17, at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

Arthur Blythe Quartet—Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Friday, Feb. 17, at 8:30.

Heavenly Jazz Concert Series—The fourth in a series of six benefit concerts, this one performed by Roland Hanna's quartet, with Jon Faddis. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 5. For tickets, call 369-8040.)

Gil Scott-Heron and Brian Jackson—With Dollar Brand. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8 and 11:30.)

Leon and Mary Russell—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, at 8.

The Spinners—Avery Fisher Hall. TR 4-2424. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8:30.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Antonio Amaral—Paintings, many of them closeup views of plant parts. Through March 8. (Ault, 25 E. 77th St.)

Milton Avery (1893-1965)—A yellow fish couchant on an oval blue field is one of the highlights of this show, the sixth annual one in which the artist's works are displayed with those of some of his friends—eleven this time, among them Marsden Hartley, Mark Rothko, and Barnett Newman. Through Friday, Feb. 24. (Borgenicht, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

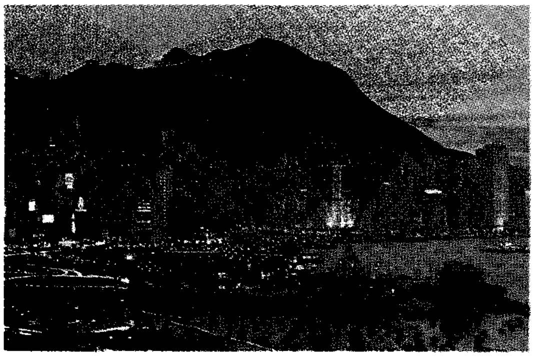
Rudolf Baranik—Abstract paintings. Through Feb. 28. (Lerner-Heller, 956 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

Julius Bissier (1893-1965)—Oil temperas, watercolors, and monotypes. Through March 18. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

George Booth—Cartoons and other drawings, some in color, dealing with ill-assorted musical ensembles, shady doings in the garage back room, and what passes for domestic tranquillity in Mr. Booth's special world, with its abundance of ill-tempered cats and dogs. Through March 4. (Nicholls, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Roy Carruthers—Three men with necks like

‘On our 6th day, we were entertained by friends.’



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Spend your first few days doing all the famous Hong Kong activities. Shop for treasures, both Oriental and Occidental, you just cannot find at home.

Enjoy being thoroughly spoiled in our grand hotels. See the other side of Hong Kong: the tranquil countryside.

Then there’s the delectable choice of food from all the regions of China. One possibility is to dine on your own floating restaurant. Other sampans pull alongside. Freshly cooked seafood is presented at your table and your favorite drink is mixed at a floating bar. A group of musicians comes to serenade you. Such enterprising eating makes a Hong Kong holiday truly memorable.

And what will the next day hold? A tantalizing choice still awaits. You’ll be amazed how much there is to do on a summer vacation in Hong Kong. You’ll never run out of interest. Only time.

For further information on a vacation in Hong Kong, please contact your travel agent or write to The Hong Kong Tourist Association, 548 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10036.

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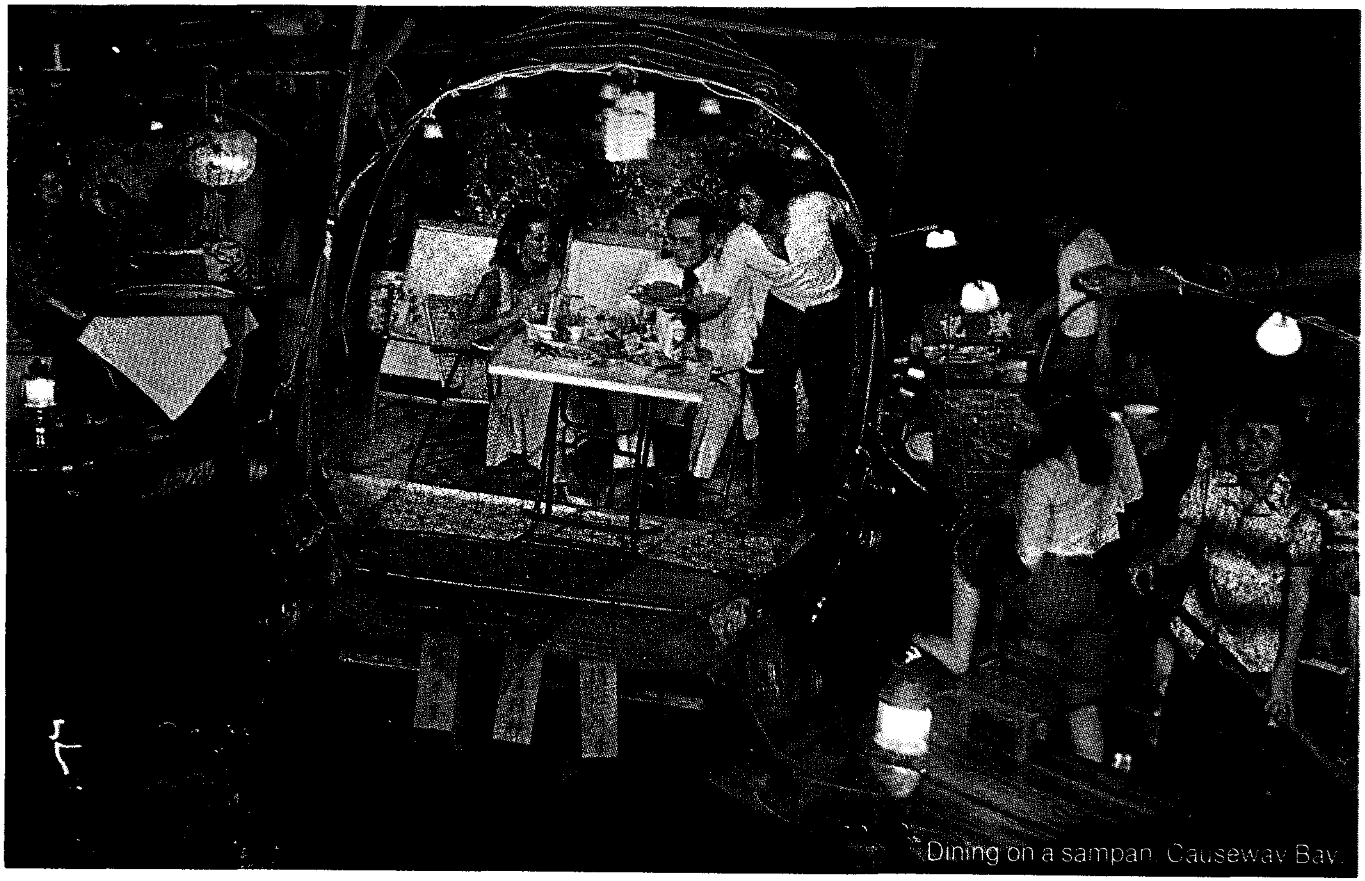
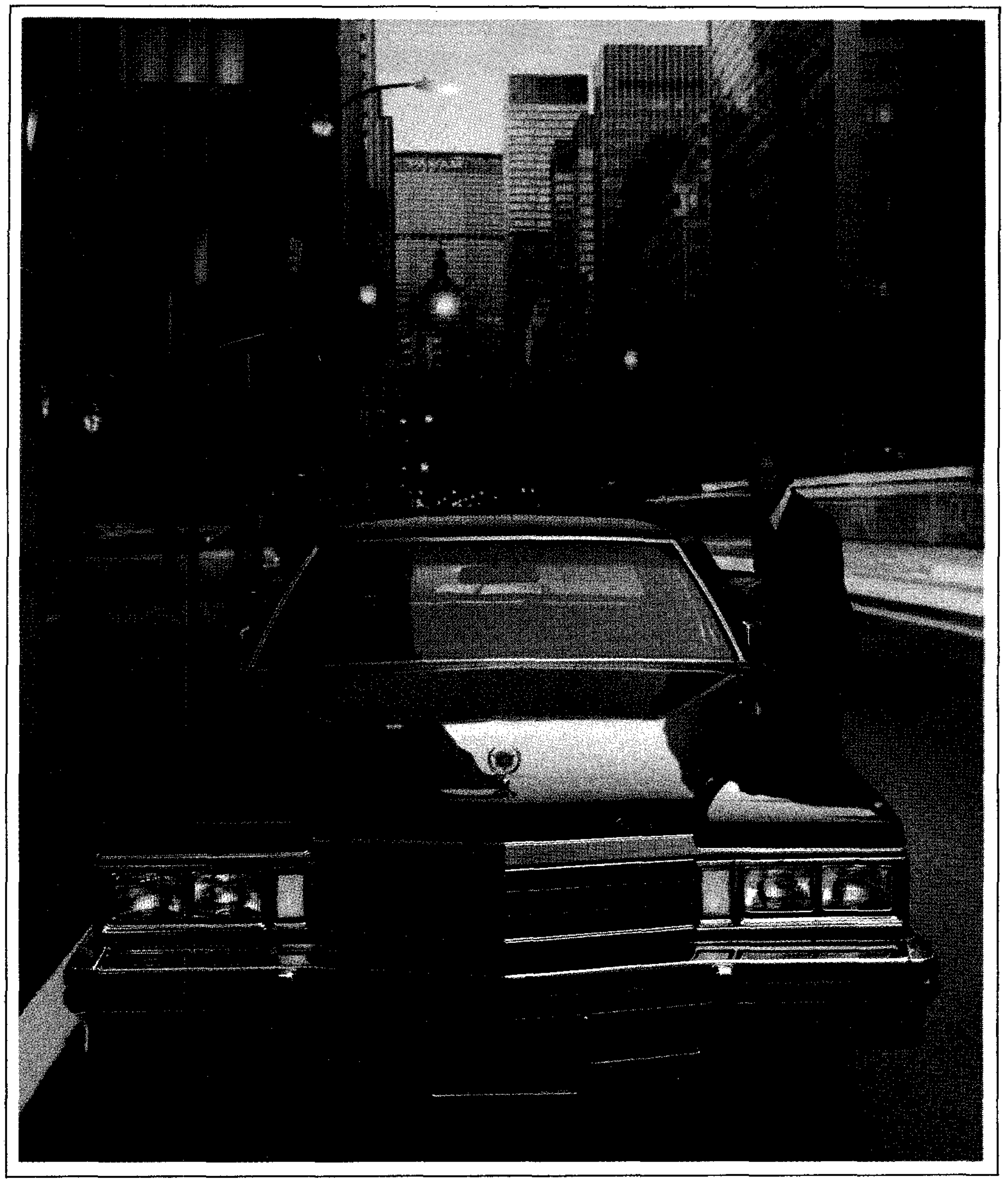


Dining on a sampan, Causeway Bay.

HONGKONG



The Cadillac Hour

Time to head home. Time to discover anew how accommodating your Cadillac can be. As you slide in and adjust the plush power seat, you feel the tensions of the day begin to ease. The quiet surrounds you. Push a button . . . and the stereo radio seeks out music to match your mood. Stop for weekend supplies and the available new electronic level control activates automatically to maintain a smooth, level ride. Merge onto the freeway and you appreciate those special Cadillac conveniences available . . . as your Cadillac remembers to turn on its lights with the approach of dusk. The Cadillac Hour. In some ways, it's the best time of the day.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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chimneys, spouting smoke, forthrightly entitled "Three Smokers." And other paintings of similar figures, similarly smoking. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (ACA, 25 E. 73rd St.)

Stuart Davis (1894-1964)—A show of watercolors done while the artist was still in his teens and a student of Robert Henri, who exhorted his pupils to draw "things in the raw." Subjects include fish markets, vaudeville shows, and street scenes. This exhibit is running concurrently with Davis's show at the Brooklyn Museum. Through March 4. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

Anne Elliott—Watercolor sketches of the craggier Himalayan mountainsides, done on the spot, and wall-size representations of the same terrain made of crumpled and painted rice paper shaped over muslin; one glacier spills right out on the gallery floor. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Louis Finkelstein—Dense brushstrokes characterize this new set of abstract paintings based on the landscapes of western Connecticut. Through March 1. (Ingber, 3 E. 78th St.)

Ilse Getz—Assemblages and collages employing Scrabble tiles, dolls' heads, birds' eggs, bits of old wood, and the artist's own sketches. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison—Hand-colored murals composed of aerial maps, photographic blowups, written texts, and other data that make arguments for various ecological projects. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Feldman, 33 E. 74th St. Open Mondays.)

Shirley Hendrick—Still-lifes, portraits, and landscapes. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Margaret Israel—A captivating outpouring of sculpture, paintings, and wall pieces by this industrious and wonderfully imaginative artist, who concentrates here on tugboats, in wood or ceramics, painted in circus colors; domestic fowl (hens, roosters, guinea fowl, and turkeys); and flowers, done with a van Gogh intensity. Through March 4. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Robert LaHotan—Oil paintings that catch the winter bleakness and the summer lushness of the Maine countryside, plus sunny interiors in country houses. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Kraushaar, 1055 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Leo Manso—Recent collages and paintings influenced by a visit to Tunisia. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Gurewitsch, 55 E. 74th St. Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

Louisa Matthiasdottir—Landscapes of Iceland as well as still-life and figure paintings. Through March 11. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Harvey Quaytman—Large, abstract, shaped canvases that have a Constructivist bent and seem to have been inspired by skyscraper towers. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (McKee, 140 E. 63rd St.)

Paul Vázquez—Abstract paintings. Through March 11. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

John Wesley—There is a poster-like simplicity to these joking paintings and plywood cutouts depicting such varied subjects as a bungalow à la Hollywood and a dog taking a nap on the bosom of a placidly recumbent Queen Victoria. Through March 2. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Group Shows—At the **Sabarsky**, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St.: Drawings and watercolors by German and Austrian Expressionists, but a little sunnier than the usual tracts by these artists, who include Kokoschka, Nolde, and Schiele. Through March 31. . . . **Stone**, 48 E. 86th St.: Raoul Middleman (waterfront vistas, boldly painted figures), Edward Renouf (dark abstract panels made up of brushstrokes as fine as iron filings), William Klapp (dark drawings of hungry-looking nudes), and Cara Croninger (fetishes, necklaces, and amulets with a wild aura). Through Feb. 28. . . . **Wildenstein**, 19 E. 64th St.: Drawings and small sculptures by Boucher, Fragonard, Henry Moore, and others. Through Friday, Feb. 24. (Closed Saturdays.)

Sculpture—Fifty-one pieces by as many artists (Chaim Gross, Barbara Lekberg, and William Zorach among them) constitute the anniversary show at the Sculpture Center, which started modestly fifty years ago as the Clay Club. Through Wednesday, Feb. 22. (167 E. 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Jack Beal—New realist paintings and pastels entitled "Virtues and Vices," by an artist who found his model-friends far more willing to represent the latter than the former. Through March 2. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

Larry Bell and Eric Orr—A collaborative sculptural effort, so far only conceptual, proposing a bowl-shaped glass-walled "solar fountain," seventeen feet in diameter and ten feet tall, in which a billowing fog is in continuous eruption. A scale model is on display, along with architectural renderings (on glass) and a video documentation. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Multiples-Goodman, 38 E. 57th St.)

Enrique Castro-Cid—Paintings and drawings in which a cow, a rabbit, and several human figures are subjected to an abstruse mathematical formula that distorts them the way those Mercator projections distort the earth's land masses, making Greenland as big as the whole United States. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Droll-Kolbert, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Saul Chase—Precisionist paintings of empty streets, "L" platforms, and factory buildings, done in low-key colors that somehow give a lyrical quality to these bleak subjects. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Crispo, 41 E. 57th St. Mondays through Fridays, 11:30 to 4:30; Saturdays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

Michael de Lisio—Small naïve sculptures of figures in the arts by a self-taught artist who was in his mid-fifties before he got started; one shows Ezra Pound leaving the asylum the military put him in, and another shows an imposing Henry James. There are a dozen pieces in all. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Edward Giobbi—Abstract oils and mixed mediums on canvas. Through March 11. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Adolph Gottlieb (1903-74)—Late works: twenty monotypes in which a few blobs and rectangles of color add up to something greater than the sum of its parts; several large oils; and a couple of bright-colored, lighthearted pieces of sculpture cut out of sheet steel. Through Wednesday, Feb. 22. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

James Juszczyk—Paintings in which geometric shapes are painted in contrasting colors. Through March 11. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

Hugh Kepets—Realist paintings of architectural details. Through March 2. (Fischbach, 29 W. 57th St.)

Earl Kerkam (1891-1965)—Late works (twenty-two oils) by an artist who shifted with equal facility from Cubist abstractions to realist portraits and still-lifes. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St.)

Frances Kuehn—Superrealist oils and watercolors in which black-and-white photographs of her subjects are enormously enlarged by a grid system of her own devising; the oils are of friends and the watercolors of convoluted striped drapery. Through Thursday, Feb. 23. (Sachs, 29 W. 57th St.)

Richard Merkin—Paintings, drawings, and collages. Through March 3. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Nabil Nahas—Open geometric figures outlined in pencil-thin ribbons of color and seen against an unobtrusive yellow pattern. First one-man show in New York. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Morgan Russell (1886-1953)—Small, sensitive figure drawings done under the tutelage of Matisse, color notes for formal works, and memorabilia make up a show of this Synchromist artist's work that is running concurrently with one at the Whitney. Through March 4. (Washburn, 42 E. 57th St.)

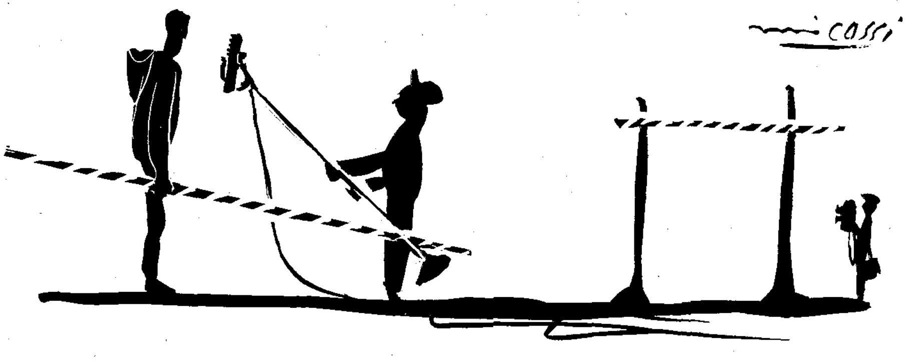
Dorothy Tabak—Abstract collages made up of fragments of cheesecloth, old canvases, rice paper, and such, painted in rather high-pitched colors. Through Thursday, Feb. 23. (Phoenix, 30 W. 57th St.)

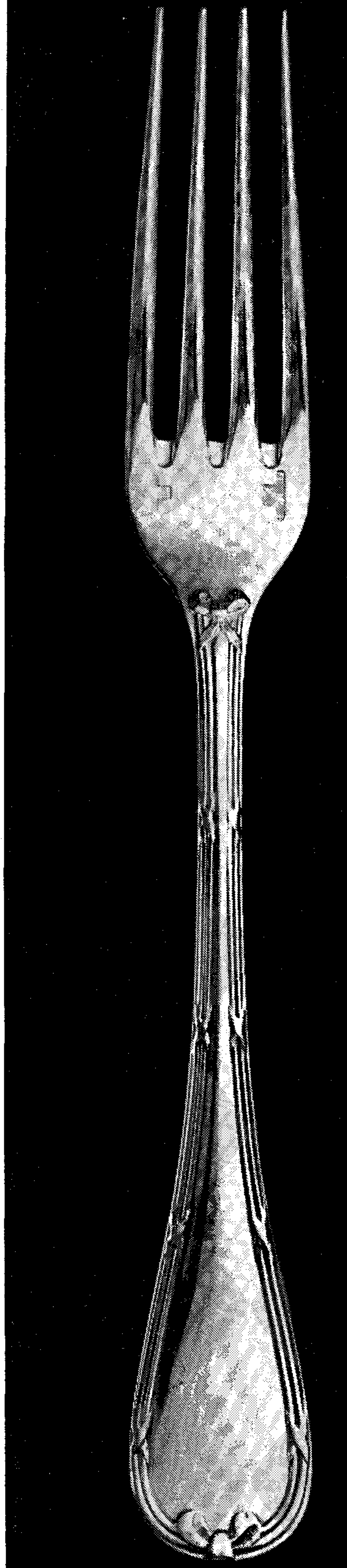
Isaac Witkin—Steel sculptures, ranging from small tabletop pieces to massive free-form structures. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St.)

Abby Zito—A series of monoprints in which twenty-five human hearts, drawn from the same pattern (more anatomical than valentine-ish), are decorated with abstract designs that illustrate a wide range of emotions, subject to the viewer's individual interpretation. Some look happy, some look blue, but only one has a universal message: it is solid black. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (Parsons-Dreyfuss, 24 W. 57th St.)

Indian Paintings—These small treasures from the subcontinent date from 1640 to 1850, and show a marked Persian influence. They are done in gouache, in splendid detail, and depict rajas and elephants (strikingly modern) and the exploits of Krishna, who is always painted a worshipful blue. Through March 11. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **Alonzo**, 30 W. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and photographs by Lionel Gilbert, Legh Myers, and others. Through March 2. . . . **Aaron Berman**, 50 W. 57th St.: Small-scale paintings, drawings, and sculptures from the seventies by the gallery artists. They include Sherman Drexler, Anne Tabachnick, and John Ferro. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. . . . **Genesis**, 41 E. 57th St.: "The Human Figure in Painting and Sculpture" has works by Leland Bell, Red Grooms, Alice Neel, and others. Through March 4. . . . **Janis**, 6 W. 57th St.: Paintings and sculptures by seven Americans, including new pieces by Marisol (wooden figures of her father and Picasso which look as if they had been chopped out with a hatchet); Wesselmann (another in the Great American Nude series); and Segal (plaster life casts painted pink or blue). Through March 4. . . . **Kennedy**, 40 W. 57th St.: Seventy or so drawings by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Americans, including a captivating pencil sketch of a little girl in a swing by Winslow Homer; a dancing faun by Benjamin West; and a set of six tiny watercolors of the Newport scene in the late eighteen-hundreds by Hugh Newell. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. . . . **Matisse**, 41 E. 57th St.: Works by gallery regulars now on exhibition include a couple of paintings by Balthus carried over from his recent show; several oils and pieces of sculpture by Miró; and a number of Chagalls. Through Saturday, Feb. 25.





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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

. . . MIDTOWN, 11 E. 57th St.: Watercolors by five artists: Edward Betts, Ethel Magafan, Hans Moller, William Thon, and Robert Vickrey. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. . . . NOBÉ, 250 W. 57th St.: This sunlit aerie on the twenty-sixth floor has abstract works in black-and-white by four post-Minimalist artists—Catherine L. Porter, Stephen Rosenthal, Sean Scully, and Merrill Wagner. Through Saturday, Feb. 25.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Ivan Biro / Duane Zalouden—Natural-wood, spiral-shaped sculptures. / Abstract watercolors on canvas and paper. Through Saturday, Feb. 18. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Rafael Ferrer—Kayak-like constructions, drawings on navigational charts, and a roomlike environment entitled "Valparaiso, Hotel Aubry." Through March 9. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Kent Floeter—Outsize post-Minimalist drawings in which the "drawn" lines of the composition are achieved by gouging out the surface of the plasterboard ground (either natural white or painted with red lead) or by driving steel bars into it broadside. Through March 2. (Boone, a new gallery—*another*?—at 420 West Broadway.)

Marcia Hafif—Monochromatic paintings consisting of two coats of white lead and pigments hand ground in oil. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Sol LeWitt—Drawings that cover the artist's whole career, beginning with striking brush-and-ink analyses of celebrated paintings by Botticelli, Goya, Velázquez, and so on (LeWitt has paid his dues), and going on to the current shorthand notations that might have been jotted down on a shingle by a carpenter. Additional works by the artist are currently being shown at the Museum of Modern Art and at the Brooklyn Museum. Through Feb. 28. (Weber, 420 West Broadway.)

Knox Martin—Large, bright-colored abstract paintings with an *art-moderne* flavor by an artist whose fundamental subject is Woman. Through March 8. (Jack, 138 Prince St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

Frank Palaia / Porfirio Di Donna—An assemblage of thirty-two "Photo-Substitutes," in which color photographs of a bunch of soup cans, a comic-strip panel, and a plain-looking girl (to pick out three) could pass for originals by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, and Chuck Close. / Large paintings in which fields of a dark color—blue, gray, and so on—are traversed by horizontal bands of dots and dashes in a contrasting hue. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Paul Rotterdam / Susan Eder—Stark, mysterious panels, ranging from a bleak gray to matte black, usually with architectural details (rudimentary cornices and baseboards) at the top and bottom, and perhaps a pair of tiny slitlike windows incised through the canvas. / Small, gemlike photographic works, mostly done in series; for instance, pairs of color prints in which something corporeal—a swan, say, or a family Christmas tree—is matched by a wisp of cloud almost identical in shape. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

Charles Schucker—Stained-canvas works, in which sparse abstract designs are obtained by pouring thinned paint on untreated cloth in more or less controlled dribbles and blobs. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

Dennis Whitcopf / Martin Schreiber—What appear to be soft, mysterious bundles tightly trussed up with rope are really made of limestone or wood, bound with steel cable. / Color Xeroxes, mostly closeups of Coca-Cola cans found flattened in the street. In some of them, incongruous hues are achieved by the use of various filters. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Neill, 136 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At CASTELLI, 420 West Broadway: Bruce Nauman's plaster-and-fibreglass spiral sculptural piece takes up the entire main room; in other spaces are found Dan Flavin's fluorescent-tube works, Billy Apple's triangle of white paint applied to the floor, and Robert Barry's wall drawing. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. . . . THE DRAWING CENTER, 137 Greene St.: Drawings by ten young artists. Through March 11. (Open Wednesday evenings until 9.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Victor Candell (1903-77)—Paintings and drawings that follow this artist through his precocious academic days, through the ritual studies in Paris (in and out of Cubism), and on to the totally abstract collage constructions of his final years. Through Feb. 28. (Roko, 90 E. 10th St. Opens at noon.)

Nancy Graves—A five-thousand-pound bronze sculpture. Through April 30. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

William Wegman—Videotapes and drawings. Through Feb. 27. (Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. Mondays, except Feb. 20, through Thursdays, noon to 9; Fridays, 11 to 4:30.)

Frank Young—A conceptual piece consisting of pastel-and-crayon drawings and called "Who's in Egypt?" Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway. Opens at 1.)

Group Shows—At CITY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CENTER, ground-floor arcade, 33 W. 42nd St.: Nancy Azara, Vivienne Thaul Wechter, and other women artists showing paintings and sculptures. Through Thursday, Feb. 23. (Closed Saturdays.) . . . THE NEW MUSEUM, 65 Fifth Ave., at 14th St.: A show of "'Bad' Paintings," described in the catalogue as "figurative work that defies, either deliberately or by virtue of disinterest, the classic canons of good taste, draftsmanship, acceptable source material, rendering, or illusionistic representation." It succeeds admirably on all counts. Through Feb. 28. (Opens weekdays at noon; open Wednesdays until 8.) . . . PRETTO, 176 Franklin St., near Hudson St.: Works by Minimalist artists Donald Judd, Fred Sandback, and others. Through Feb. 28. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 3 to 6.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Les Krims and William Larson—The photographs on exhibit here include manipulated color Polaroid prints by Mr. Krims and abstractions, also in color, by Mr. Larson. Through Saturday, Feb. 25. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Bea Nettles / Norman Sanders—Surreal prints made by such non-silver processes as silk-screening, a 3M copier, and a commercial color method. / This photographer has set himself the task of recording people in their favorite rooms at home. Home in this case is Rockland County, and the subjects are Mr. Sanders' neighbors. Through March 4. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

John Phillips—Photographs of the Arab-Israeli conflict in Jerusalem in 1948, and of fifty-one of the people who figure in those early pictures as they appear today. Through Feb. 27. (America-Israel Cultural Foundation, third floor, 4 E. 54th St. Mondays, except Feb. 20, through Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Fred Picker—New England landscapes by a photographer who makes his home in Vermont. Through March 11. (Helios, 18 E. 67th St.)

F. A. Rinehart (1861-1928)—Platinum-print studio portraits of American Indians (among the more famous, Chief Red Cloud, Geronimo, and Chief American Horse) made at an Omaha fair in 1898. Through March 11. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St.)

John Thomson (1837-1921)—A record of his travels in China, Cyprus, and Cambodia, as well as an early essay on street people in London. Through April 1. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St.)

James Van DerZee—An exhibit of his photographs chronicling black life in America, and in particular Harlem, has been mounted by the Brooklyn Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Groups Shows—At the INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: A comprehensive survey of Swiss photography, from 1840 to the present, from photojournalism to portraiture. Through March 5. (Also open Sundays, 11 to 5, and Tuesdays until 8.) . . . MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.: Two photographic exhibitions are on view here. One consists of about seventy-five prints (all of them made prior to the outbreak of the First World War) by Edward Steichen, the other, a group show (the subject is streets of America and the dates covered are 1940-55), includes works by Lisette Model, Louis Faurer, and Robert Frank. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Twentieth-century furniture, metalwork, ceramics, and glass from the permanent collection have been reinstalled on the second floor and can be seen starting Thursday, Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A show of prints, photographs, architectural and ornament drawings, and illustrated books acquired by the museum during the last five years. The range is vast—Dürer to Weegee. Through Sunday, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ An exhibit of about five hundred items in the costume collection. For their time and place, they represent the ne plus ultra in luxury, such as a pair of seventeenth-century French white-kid shoes embroidered in pastel-colored and metal-silk thread, and a Fortuny evening dress from this century trimmed with Venetian-glass beads. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The Sol LeWitt retrospective includes modular sculptures as well as drawings done directly on the wall. Through April 4. (A LeWitt show also at the John Weber Gallery, 420 West Broadway, and at the Brooklyn Museum.) . . . ¶ A show of ninety architectural drawings that Le Corbusier made for half as many projects (studio assistants had a hand in some of the sketches) between the years 1912 and 1962. Through March 26. . . . ¶ An exhibit of collages and drawings by Jean Arp. Through March 5. . . . **photography:** Early Steichen prints. Through March 28. . . . ¶ Group show of street photography. Through April 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—"Willem de Kooning in East Hampton," a show of the noted artist's paintings, drawings, and sculptures executed since 1963, when he moved from New York City to Long Island. Through April 23. . . . ¶ Collages by the contemporary Czech artist Jiři Kolář which incorporate written and printed texts, maps, photographs, and so forth. Through March 26. (Open daily. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, and Monday, Feb. 20, from 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—A show of Duane Hanson's startlingly realistic polyester and fibre-glass life casts—twenty-nine pieces in all, including "Hard Hat," "Rita the Waitress," and "Photographer." They are so lifelike that it is difficult to tell the sculpture from the audience, until somebody moves. Through April 16. . . . ¶ "Synchromism and American Color Abstraction, 1910-1925" brings together the works of the founders of Synchromism—Morgan Russell and Stanton Macdonald-Wright—with works by twenty-eight American and three European artists (Marsden Hartley, Joseph Stella, and Robert Delaunay among them), all of whom were early experimenters in pure-color abstraction. Through March 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 9, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Whitney Downtown Museum, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—"Out of the House," a show of works by women artists who either use household objects as subjects (coffee cups by Janet Stayton, for instance) or use techniques that resemble domestic crafts (Miriam Schapiro's collaged cotton apron, for one). Through March 1. (Open Mondays, except Feb. 20, through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of Stuart Davis's work, including a large-scale mural and seventy paintings supplemented by watercolors and sketches. Through March 19. A complementary show is at the Hirschl & Adler Galleries. . . . ¶ Sol LeWitt's prints from the seventies. Through March 4. (See also Museum of Modern Art, above.) . . . ¶ A dozen dresses, coats, and wraps by two early-twentieth-century Italian designers, Mariano Fortuny and Maria Monaci Gallenga. . . . **photography:** Works by James Van DerZee. Through March 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays and Monday, Feb. 20. Hours: Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5; Monday, Feb. 20, from 1 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—No surprises at the moment: just the usual exhibits and collections. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 4:45, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Asia House, 112 E. 64th St.—A show of drinking vessels and such, made of metal (often silver) and engraved, embossed, or inlaid with niello, the work of Persian craftsmen of the Sasanian Empire (226 to 651 A.D.). Also related works. Through March 12. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Nearly four hundred objects from the museum's collection of decorative arts—textiles, wallpaper, furniture, ceramics—arranged in ways that point up their origins, function, techniques, and so forth. Through Feb. 28. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A small, teasing sample of the recently acquired Heineman collection of literary, scientific, and musical manuscripts. Through Sunday, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ More than a hundred seventeenth-century Dutch drawings (ten of them Rembrandts) on loan from the Institut Néerlandais, in Paris. Through Sunday, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ A display of books that have been enhanced by an inscription or a drawing either by the author or simply by a reader; for example, James Thurber made thirteen pencil drawings in his first edition of Hemingway's "Green Hills of Africa," and it is on view. Through March 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 49 W. 53rd St.—A show devoted to representations of dogs in such folk-art forms as pottery, needlework, furniture, and paintings. Through April 2. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—Social history, decorative styles, and macabre deaths are evinced in a small, choice showing of New York City tombstone rubbings by Cecily Firestein. Through April 30. (Open daily except Tuesday, Feb. 21. Hours: Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays and Monday, Feb. 20, from 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibit of children's literature and illustrations that includes some original drawings for "The Wizard of Oz," a manuscript of Kate Greenaway's "Mother Goose," and a first edition of "Alice in Wonderland." Through April 15. . . . ¶ "Literature in Exile" is the title of an exhibit of original letters, manuscripts, and early printed editions drawn from the Berg Collection. Through April 29. (The library is open daily except Thursdays, Sundays, and Monday, Feb. 20. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 9. The Berg Collection, however, always closes at 6.)

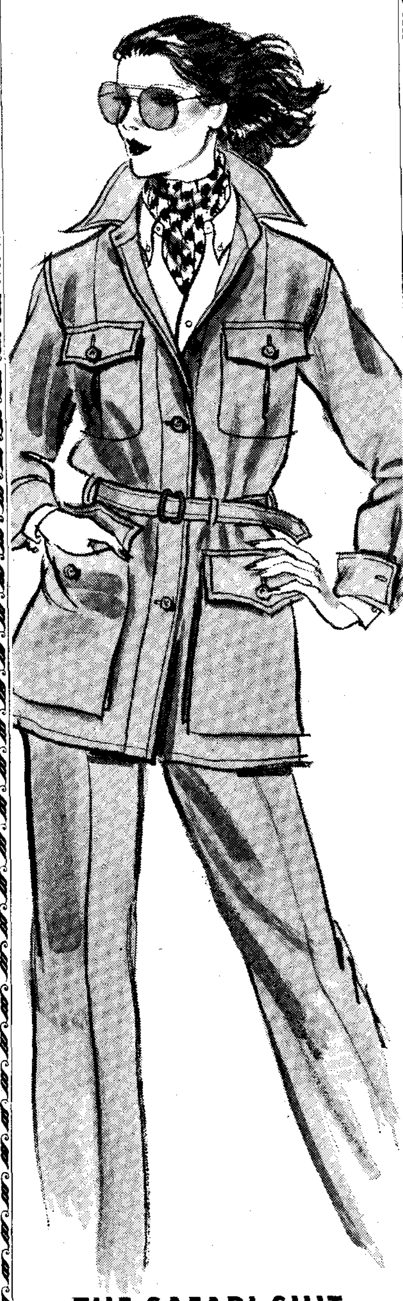
Studio Museum in Harlem, 2033 Fifth Ave., at 125th St.—Batik paintings by Leo Twiggs. . . . ¶ A showing by two photographers: Mel Wright's depictions of South American life, and Al Fennar's near-abstractions. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 6, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.) Both shows through Sunday, Feb. 19.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 580-9830, for Avery Fisher Hall TR 4-2424, for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, Feb. 15: "Boris Godunov," with Florence Quivar, Martti Talvela, Wieslaw Ochman, Robert Nagy, James Atherton, Morley Meredith, Allan Monk, Paul Plishka, and Fernando Corena; conducted by Kazimierz Kord. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Feb. 16: "Adriana Le-



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

couvreur," with Montserrat Caballé, Mignon Dunn, José Carreras, Anselmo Colzani, and Ivo Vinco; Jesús López-Cobos.... ¶ Friday evening, Feb. 17: "Otello," with Katia Ricciarelli, Jean Kraft, James McCracken, and Cornell MacNeil; James Levine.... ¶ Saturday matinée, Feb. 18: "Eugene Onegin," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Isola Jones, Sherrill Milnes, Nicolai Gedda, and Paul Plishka; James Levine.... ¶ Saturday evening, Feb. 18: "Thaïs," with Beverly Sills, Richard Fredricks, Jean Van Ree, and James Morris; John Pritchard.... ¶ Monday evening, Feb. 20: "Otello," with Katia Ricciarelli, Jean Kraft, James McCracken, and Cornell MacNeil; James Levine.... ¶ Tuesday evening, Feb. 21: A new production of Donizetti's "La Favorita," with Shirley Verrett, Alma Jean Smith, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; Jesús López-Cobos. (A benefit performance; for tickets, call 582-7500.)... ¶ Wednesday evening, Feb. 22: "Boris Godunov," with Mignon Dunn, Martti Talvela, Wieslaw Ochman, Robert Nagy, Andrea Velis, Morley Meredith, Allan Monk, Paul Plishka, and Fernando Corena; Kazimierz Kord.... ¶ Thursday evening, Feb. 23: "Thaïs," with Beverly Sills, Sherrill Milnes, Jean Van Ree, and James Morris; John Pritchard.... ¶ Friday evening, Feb. 24: "Otello," with Katia Ricciarelli, Jean Kraft, James McCracken, and Cornell MacNeil; James Levine.... ¶ Saturday matinée, Feb. 25: "Boris Godunov," with Mignon Dunn, Martti Talvela, Wieslaw Ochman, Robert Nagy, Andrea Velis, Morley Meredith, Allan Monk, Paul Plishka, and Fernando Corena; Kazimierz Kord. (A nonsubscription performance.)... ¶ Saturday evening, Feb. 25: "La Favorita," with Shirley Verrett, Alma Jean Smith, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; Jesús López-Cobos. (Evenings at 8; on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7:30, and Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8:30. Matinées at 2.)

New York City Opera—Opening performances of the season, which will continue through Sunday, April 30—Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8: "La Traviata," with Mariana Niculescu, Rebecca Mercer-White, Henry Price, and Pablo Elvira; conducted by Imre Pallo.... ¶ Friday, Feb. 24, at 8: "Mefistofele," with Judith Ehrlich, Sandra Walker, Samuel Ramey, and Kenneth Collins; Julius Rudel.... ¶ Saturday, Feb. 25, at 2: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with RoseMarie Freni, Enrico Di Giuseppe, and William Justus; and "Pagliacci," with Sherry Zannoth, Herman Malamood, Richard Fredricks, Thomas Jamerson, and Alan Kays. Cal Stewart Kellogg conducting both.... ¶ Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Esther Hinds, John Sandor, and David Holloway; Judith Somogi. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Bernard Haitink conducting Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 16-18, and Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 8:30 (all with Igor Oistrakh, violin); and Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8:30; Friday, Feb. 24, at 2; and Tuesday, Feb. 28, at 7:30 (no soloists).... ¶ Victor Borge conducting on Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8:30 (no soloists).

Cleveland Orchestra—Lorin Maazel conducting the last two in a series of concerts. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Feb. 17, at 8, with Bruno Leonardo Gelber, piano; and Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8, with Julia Hamari, mezzo-soprano, and Richard Cassilly, tenor.)

National Symphony Orchestra—Mstislav Rostropovich directing a performance of Verdi's Requiem, with Galina Vishnevskaya, soprano; Julia Hamari, mezzo-soprano; Seth McCoy, tenor; Paul Plishka, bass; and the University of Maryland Chorus. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, Feb. 20, at 8.)

Contemporary Chamber Ensemble—Arthur Weisberg conducting a program including the American première of Pierre Boulez' "Pli Selon Pli," with Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 8.)

Clarion Concerts Orchestra—Newell Jenkins conducting a program of concerti grossi. The final concert of the season. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 8:30.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting, with Joseph Kalichstein, piano; Jaime Laredo, violin; and Sharon Robinson, cello. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8.)

Salzburg Camerata Orchestra—Antonio Janigro conducting. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 2:30.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Paavo Berglund conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 3.)

Federal Music Society—John Baldon conducting an orchestra of twenty-six in a program of eighteenth-century music performed on antique musical instruments of the period. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 8.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler directing a performance of Weber's "Oberon" in concert form, with Roberta Knie and Carmen Balthrop, sopranos; Shirley Love and Julia Hamari, mezzo-sopranos; Nicolai Gedda and John West, tenors; Richard Clark, baritone; and the Dessoff Choirs. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8.)

Musica Sacra—Richard Westenburg directing. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8.)

New York Choral Society—Robert DeCormier directing an all-Brahms program, with Eleanor Bergquist, soprano; Robert Shiesley, baritone; and an orchestra. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8.)

RECITALS

Paul Badura-Skoda—Piano, in the last in a series of all-Schubert recitals. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 8.)

Americo Caramuta—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Feb. 16, at 8.)

Elizabeth Parcells—Soprano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Thursday, Feb. 16, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—The fourth in a series of six concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, Feb. 17, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

League-ISCM—The third in this season's series of seven programs of contemporary music, this one performed by the New York New Music Ensemble, with Lucy Shelton, soprano, and Mark Shuman, cello. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, Feb. 17, at 8.)

Quartetto Beethoven di Roma—Chamber music. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

Music from Aston Magna—Bernard Krainis, recorder; Carole Bogard, soprano; Michel Piguet, baroque oboe; John Solum, flauto traverso; and others. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Yehudi Wyner, composer/pianist, with several members of the Ensemble, including Lucy Stoltzman, violin, and Stephen Taylor, oboe. (Church of St. Luke in-the-Fields, 487 Hudson St., at Grove St. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8. For information about tickets, call 943-0950.)

Waverly Consort—A program entitled "La Contenance Angloise, Music of Britain from the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance." (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8.)

American Chamber Trio—Peter Basquin, piano; June DeForest, violin; and Daniel Morganstern, cello. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8:30.)

Vermeer Quartet—With Scott Nickrenz, viola. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8:30, and Sunday, Feb. 19, at 2.)

Carlo Bergonzi—Tenor. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 2:30.)

Beethoven Society—Oscar Shumsky and Milton Kaye in a recital of Beethoven sonatas for violin and piano. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 3. For information about tickets, call 421-8900, Ext. 324.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Jaime Laredo and Pinchas Zukerman, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; Lynn Harrell and Leslie Parnas, cello; and Charles Wadsworth, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 5, and Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7:30.)

Eastman School of Music Series—The fourth in a series of five concerts, this one performed by Bonita Boyd, flute; Maria Luisa Faini, piano; Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; and Robert Sylvester, cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Feb. 19, at 8.)

Lazar Berman—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Monday, Feb. 20, at 8.)

Music with Jens Nygaard—A program of music (by Arthur Sullivan, Hugo Wolf, Brahms, and others) inspired by Shakespeare and performed by actors Marybeth Hurt and Paul Rudd; Berenice Bramson, soprano; Paul Sperry, tenor; and members of the Westchester Chamber Orchestra. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Feb. 20, at 8.)

William Tim Read—Harpsichord. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 8.)

Jan Peerce, Laura Thomas, and Pablo Elvira—Tenor, soprano, and baritone, in an operatic recital of arias, duets, and trios. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 8.)

Viktor Tretyakov—Violin. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8.)

Ensemble for Early Music—A performance of "Roman de Fauvel," a fourteenth-century French secular play, with the Ensemble singing, and playing medieval instruments. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8.)

Parnassus—A program of music of our time. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8.)

Stony Brook Concerts—The second in a series of three recitals by artists in residence of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, this one with Ronald Anderson, trumpet; Isidore Cohen, violin; Timothy Eddy, cello; John Graham, viola; Bernard Greenhouse, cello; Julius Levine, bass; and Gilbert Kalish, piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8.)

Edvard Lieber—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8.)

Tokyo String Quartet—With Minoru Nojima, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8.)

Y New Music—The third in a series of four concerts focussing on unusual combinations of voice and instruments, this one performed by the Theater Chamber Players of Kennedy Center. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 8.)

Jean-Pierre Rampal and Robert Veyron-Lacroix—Flute and harpsichord. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8.)

Beaux Arts Trio—The last in a series of concerts. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

Boehm Quintette—Chamber music for winds. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Philidor Trio—Chamber music. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Music for a While—A program entitled "La Fontaine Amoureuse, A Medieval Evening of Verse and Music by Guillaume de Machaut," performed by four musicians and an actor. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Composers' Forum—A program of works by Roger Johnson and Jonathan D. Kramer. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, Feb. 24, at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the performance.)

Kenneth Cooper—The second of two recitals played on his Houston-Broekman 1790 harpsichord. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 3.)

Claudio Arrau—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8.)

Vladimir Ashkenazy—Piano. (Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. 859-1180. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8.)

Richard Cass—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8.)

Christoph Eschenbach—Piano, in a recital postponed from Feb. 3. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8.)

New York Baroque Ensemble—A program of rarely heard baroque works. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8. For information about tickets, call 242-4087.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts., is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Knicks vs. Buffalo, Saturday, Feb. 18, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Seattle, Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Phoenix, Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8. . . . RUTGERS UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CENTER, Piscataway, N.J. (all games at 8:05): Nets vs. Seattle, Thursday, Feb. 16. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Cleveland, Friday, Feb. 17. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Seattle (a game postponed from Jan. 20), Wednesday, Feb. 22. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Houston, Friday, Feb. 24. (For information about tickets, call 977-9020.)

Hockey—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (all games at 7:35): Rangers vs. Vancouver Canucks, Wednesday, Feb. 15. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Colorado Rockies, Sunday, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Thursday, Feb. 23. . . . NASSAU COLISEUM: Islanders vs. Atlanta Flames, Saturday, Feb. 18, at 1:15. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Saturday, Feb. 25, at 8:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 516 794-9100.)

Racing—At AQUEDUCT: Thursdays through Saturdays, and Mondays, at 12:30, and Sundays at 1:05; last day Monday, May 22. The Ruthless, Sunday, Feb. 19, and the Grey Lag Handicap, Saturday, Feb. 25. . . . BOWIE, Md.: Weekdays at 1; through Friday, March 17. The Native Dancer Handicap, Saturday, Feb. 25.

Track Meet—National A.A.U. Indoor Championships. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, Feb. 24, at 7.)

Trotting—At YONKERS RACEWAY: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Feb. 25. . . . MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 5.

ET ALIA

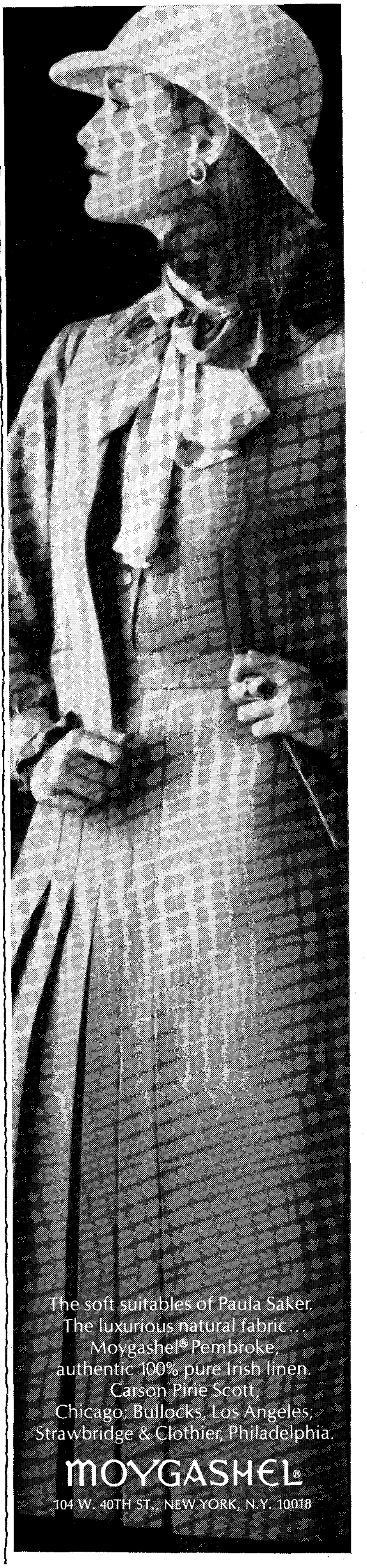
(The New York Parks Department number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 755-4100.)

Poetry and Prose Readings—Robert Penn Warren reading from his own works. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Thursday, Feb. 16, at 8.) . . . ¶ Philip Levine and Sherley Williams reading from their own works. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

National Antiques Show—Among this year's exhibits will be George Washington memorabilia, bridal ornaments from the Middle East, and Joe Franklin's collection of old sheet music. (Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. Saturday, Feb. 18, through Sunday, Feb. 26. Weekdays, 1 to 10; Sundays, 1 to 7.)

Cat Show—Empire Cat Club. (New York City Passenger Ship Terminal, Twelfth Ave. at 49th St. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 25-26, from 10 to 7.)

Auctions—At SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Thursday, Feb. 16, at 2: Renaissance and later works of art and tapestries, from several owners. . . . ¶ Thursday, Feb. 23, at 10:15 and 2: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century works of art, including Art Nouveau and Art Deco; from many owners. Exhibition starts Friday, Feb. 17. . . . CHRISTIE'S, 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Friday, Feb. 24, at 10:30: Chinese porcelains, snuff bottles, jades, and other works of art; the property of Mrs. Ellen Perlman Simon and others. Exhibition starts Saturday, Feb. 18.



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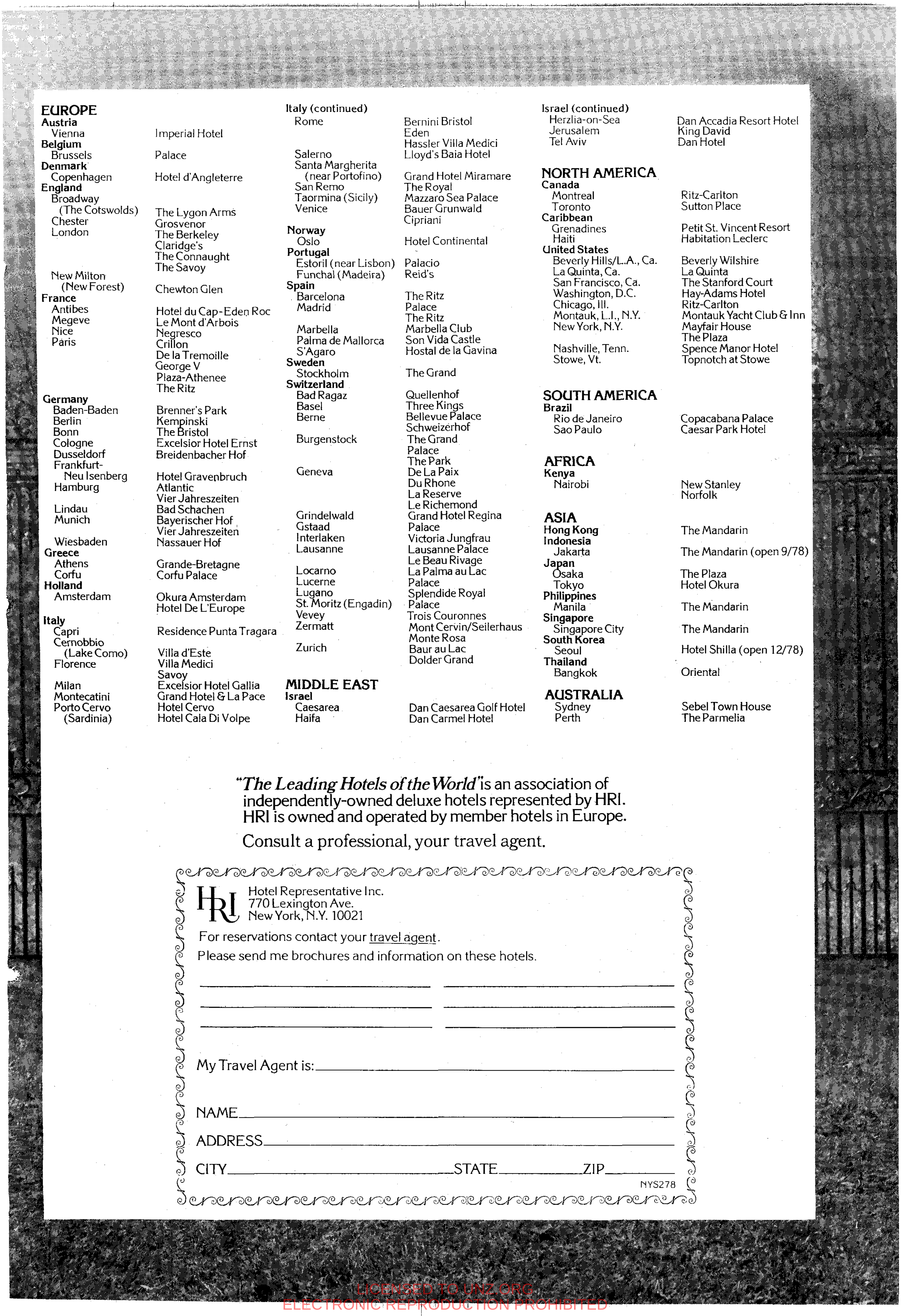

EUROPE

Austria	Vienna	Imperial Hotel
Belgium	Brussels	Palace
Denmark	Copenhagen	Hotel d'Angleterre
England	Broadway (The Cotswolds)	The Lygon Arms
	Chester	Grosvenor
	London	The Berkeley Claridge's The Connaught The Savoy
	New Milton (New Forest)	Chewton Glen
France	Antibes	Hotel du Cap-Eden Roc
	Megeve	Le Mont d'Arbois
	Nice	Negresco
	Paris	Crillon De la Tremoille George V Plaza-Athenee The Ritz
Germany	Baden-Baden	Brenner's Park
	Berlin	Kempinski
	Bonn	The Bristol
	Cologne	Excelsior Hotel Ernst
	Dusseldorf	Breidenbacher Hof
	Frankfurt-Neu Isenberg	Hotel Gravenbruch
	Hamburg	Atlantic Vier Jahreszeiten
	Lindau	Bad Schachen
	Munich	Bayerischer Hof Vier Jahreszeiten
	Wiesbaden	Nassauer Hof
Greece	Athens	Grande-Bretagne
	Corfu	Corfu Palace
Holland	Amsterdam	Okura Amsterdam Hotel De L'Europe
Italy	Capri	Residence Punta Tragara
	Cernobbio (Lake Como)	Villa d'Este
	Florence	Villa Medici Savoy
	Milan	Excelsior Hotel Gallia
	Montecatini	Grand Hotel & La Pace
	Porto Cervo (Sardinia)	Hotel Cervo Hotel Cala Di Volpe
Italy (continued)	Rome	Bernini Bristol Eden Hassler Villa Medici
	Salerno	Lloyd's Baia Hotel
	Santa Margherita (near Portofino)	Grand Hotel Miramare
	San Remo	The Royal
	Taormina (Sicily)	Mazzaro Sea Palace
	Venice	Bauer Grunwald Cipriani
Norway	Oslo	Hotel Continental
Portugal	Estoril (near Lisbon)	Palacio
	Funchal (Madeira)	Reid's
Spain	Barcelona	The Ritz
	Madrid	Palace The Ritz
	Marbella	Marbella Club
	Palma de Mallorca	Son Vida Castle
	S'Agaro	Hostal de la Gavina
Sweden	Stockholm	The Grand
Switzerland	Bad Ragaz	Quellenhof
	Basel	Three Kings
	Berne	Bellevue Palace Schweizerhof
	Burgenstock	The Grand Palace The Park
	Geneva	De La Paix Du Rhone La Reserve Le Richemond
	Grindelwald	Grand Hotel Regina
	Gstaad	Palace
	Interlaken	Victoria Jungfrau
	Lausanne	Lausanne Palace Le Beau Rivage
	Locarno	La Palma au Lac
	Lucerne	Palace
	Lugano	Splendide Royal
	St. Moritz (Engadin)	Palace
	Vevey	Trois Couronnes
	Zermatt	Mont Cervin/Seilerhaus Monte Rosa
	Zurich	Baur au Lac Dolder Grand

MIDDLE EAST

Israel	Caesarea	Dan Caesarea Golf Hotel
	Haifa	Dan Carmel Hotel
Israel (continued)	Herzlia-on-Sea	Dan Accadia Resort Hotel
	Jerusalem	King David
	Tel Aviv	Dan Hotel

NORTH AMERICA

Canada	Montreal	Ritz-Carlton
	Toronto	Sutton Place
Caribbean	Grenadines	Petit St. Vincent Resort
	Haiti	Habitation Leclerc
United States	Beverly Hills/L.A., Ca.	Beverly Wilshire
	La Quinta, Ca.	La Quinta
	San Francisco, Ca.	The Stanford Court
	Washington, D.C.	Hay-Adams Hotel
	Chicago, Ill.	Ritz-Carlton
	Montauk, L.I., N.Y.	Montauk Yacht Club & Inn
	New York, N.Y.	Mayfair House The Plaza
	Nashville, Tenn.	Spence Manor Hotel
	Stowe, Vt.	Topnotch at Stowe

SOUTH AMERICA

Brazil	Rio de Janeiro	Copacabana Palace
	Sao Paulo	Caesar Park Hotel

AFRICA

Kenya	Nairobi	New Stanley Norfolk

ASIA

Hong Kong		The Mandarin
Indonesia	Jakarta	The Mandarin (open 9/78)
Japan	Osaka	The Plaza
	Tokyo	Hotel Okura
Philippines	Manila	The Mandarin
Singapore	Singapore City	The Mandarin
South Korea	Seoul	Hotel Shilla (open 12/78)
Thailand	Bangkok	Oriental

AUSTRALIA

	Sydney	Sebel Town House
	Perth	The Parmelia

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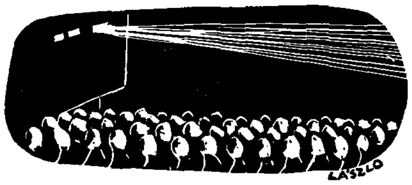
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23		

THE FILMS PLAYING THE REGULAR MOVIE HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

EAST SIDE

Art, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
Through Feb. 21: "The Lacemaker."
From Feb. 22: "Saturday Night Fever."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through Feb. 16: "The Choirboys" and "Slap Shot."
Feb. 17-21: "Short Eyes" and "Fortune and Men's Eyes."
From Feb. 22: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
Through Feb. 16: "The Lacemaker."
Feb. 17-21: "Looking for Mr. Goodbar."
From Feb. 22: "Saturday Night Fever."

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Boys in Company C."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Coma."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The One and Only."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Betsy."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"High Anxiety."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
"Blue Collar."

Fine Arts, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
"The Duellists."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"Coma."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Dersu Uzala."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"The Serpent's Egg."

59th St. East, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"The Savage Is Loose."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Saturday Night Fever."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"Coming Home."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
"Padre Padrone."

Columbia I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Through Feb. 16: "A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich."
From Feb. 17: "Annie Hall."

Columbia II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"That Obscure Object of Desire."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
"The Turning Point."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"Blue Country."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The End of the World in Our Usual Bed in a Night Full of Rain."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through Feb. 21: "Bobby Deerfield."
From Feb. 22: "Saturday Night Fever."

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
Through Feb. 16: "Semi-Tough."
From Feb. 17: "Beyond and Back."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Feb. 16: "Annie Hall."
From Feb. 17: "The Betsy."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"The Boys in Company C."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"The One and Only."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Blue Collar."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
"The Turning Point."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, Lexington at 86th. (289-8932)
"The Goodbye Girl."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"Renaldo & Clara."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through Feb. 16: "Semi-Tough."
From Feb. 17: "Beyond and Back."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Turning Point."
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 16: "Mr. Klein." Feb. 17-21: "The Turning Point." From Feb. 22: "Julia."
Theatre 3: "The Goodbye Girl."
Theatre 4: "The Children of Theatre Street."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Operation Thunderbolt."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
Through Feb. 21: "The Goodbye Girl."
From Feb. 22: "Julia."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
Through Feb. 16: "The Choirboys."
From Feb. 17: "Beyond and Back."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"The Turning Point."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Man Who Loved Women."

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"High Anxiety."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"High Anxiety."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"Coup de Grâce."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
Through Feb. 16: "The Lacemaker."
From Feb. 17 (tentative): "A Special Day."

Loews 83rd Triplex, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 21: "Semi-Tough."
From Feb. 22: "Julia."
Theatre 2: "The Goodbye Girl."
Theatre 3: "The Bad News Bears" and "The Bad News Bears in Breaking Training."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
Feb. 15: "The Seduction of Mimi" and "All Screwed Up."
From Feb. 16: "Ceddo."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Feb. 16: "Short Eyes" and "Barbarella."
Feb. 17-21: "Beyond and Back."
From Feb. 22: "Saturday Night Fever."

REVIVAL HOUSES

(These theatres are showing revivals exclusively, and for abbreviated runs. For reasons of space, or lack of it, only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

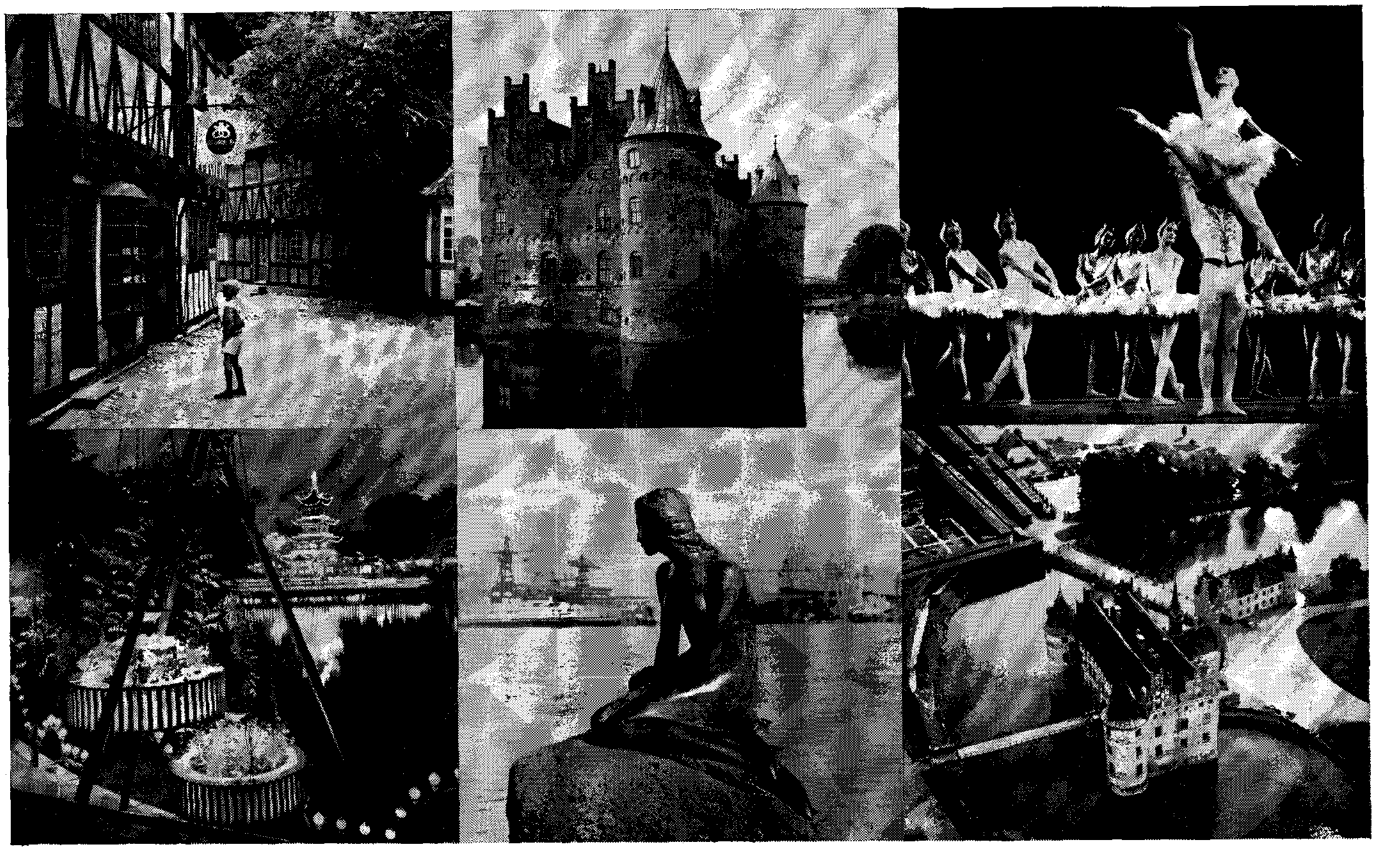
Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Feb. 15: "The Wild Child" (1970), in French, directed by, and with, François Truffaut; and "Fahrenheit 451" (1966), directed by François Truffaut, with Julie Christie and Oskar Werner.
Feb. 16: "Lust for Life" (1956), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Kirk Douglas and Anthony Quinn; and "Tea and Sympathy" (1956), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Deborah Kerr and John Kerr.
Feb. 17-18: "And Now My Love" (†); and "Happy New Year" (1973), in French, directed by Claude Lelouch, with Lino Ventura and François Fabian.
Feb. 19-20: "North by Northwest" (†) and "The Postman Always Rings Twice." (†)
Feb. 21: "Tora-San's Happy Dream" (1973), in Japanese, directed by Yoji Yamada; and "The Rikisha Man" (1958), in Japanese, directed by Hiroshi Inagaki, with Toshiro Mifune and Hideko Takamine.
Feb. 22: "Simon of the Desert" (†) and "Los Olvidados." (†)
Feb. 23: "Designing Woman" (1957), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Gregory Peck, Lauren Bacall, and Dolores Gray; and "Gigi." (†)

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Feb. 15: "Lust for Life" (1956), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Kirk Douglas and Anthony Quinn; and "Tea and Sympathy" (1956), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Deborah Kerr and John Kerr.
Feb. 16: "He Who Gets Slapped" (1924), directed by Victor Seastrom, with Lon Chaney, Norma Shearer, and John Gilbert; and "Freaks" (1932), directed by Tod Browning, with Olga Baclanova, Leila Hyams, and Wallace Ford.
Feb. 17: "Face to Face" (1976), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Liv Ullmann, Erland Josephson, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "Persona" (1967), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Bibi Andersson and Liv Ullmann.
Feb. 18: "Greaser's Palace" (1972) and "Putney Swope" (1969), both films directed by Robert Downey.
Feb. 19: "Little Women" (1933), directed by George Cukor, with Katharine Hepburn, Joan Bennett, Edna May Oliver, Frances Dee, and Spring Byington; and "Holiday" (1938), directed by George Cukor, with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Lew Ayres, and Edward Everett Horton.
Feb. 20: "Bonaparte." (†)
Feb. 21: "Designing Woman" (1957), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Gregory Peck, Lauren Bacall, and Dolores Gray; and "Gigi." (†)
Feb. 22: "The Reluctant Debutante" (1958), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Rex Harrison, Kay Kendall, John Saxon, and Sandra Dee; and "Some Came Running" (1959), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Shirley MacLaine, and Martha Hyer.
Feb. 23: "Uncle Vanya" (†); and "The Seagull" (1974), in Russian, directed by Yuli Karasik.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Feb. 16: "Children of Paradise" (1945), in French, directed by Marcel Carné, with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, and Pierre Renoir.
Feb. 17-18: "Animal Crackers" (1930), "Duck Soup" (1933), and "Horsefeathers" (1932), all with the Marx Brothers.
Feb. 19-20: "Wizards" (†); and "Fritz the Cat" (1972), an X-rated animated cartoon, directed by Ralph Bakshi.
Feb. 21: "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz" (1974), directed by Ted Kotcheff, with Richard Dreyfuss, Jack Warden, and Joseph Wiseman; and "Inserts." (†)
Feb. 22-23: "Shame" (†) and "Hour of the Wolf." (†)

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Feb. 15: "M" (1932), in German, directed by Fritz Lang, with Peter Lorre; and "Nosferatu" (1922), a German silent film, directed by F. W. Murnau.
Feb. 16-18: "The Conformist" (1970), in Italian, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda; and "Stavisky" (1974), in French, directed by Alain Resnais, with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Charles Boyer.
Feb. 19-20: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931), in German, directed by G. W. Pabst, with Lotte Lenya; and "The Blue Angel" (1929), in German, directed by Josef von Sternberg, with Marlene Dietrich and Emil Jannings.
Feb. 21-22: "Sabotage" (1936), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, and Desmond Tester; and "Murder." (†)
From Feb. 23: "Two Women" (†); and "Marriage—Italian Style" (1964), in Italian, directed by Vittorio De Sica, with Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
Through Feb. 16: "In a Lonely Place" (1950), directed by Nicholas Ray, with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame; and "The Lusty Men" (1952), directed by Nicholas Ray, with Susan Hayward, Robert Mitchum, and Arthur Kennedy.
Feb. 17-18: "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus"; and "Bedazzled" (1967), directed by Stanley Donen, with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, and Eleanor Bron.
Feb. 19-21: "The Man Who Skied Down



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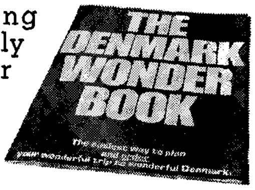
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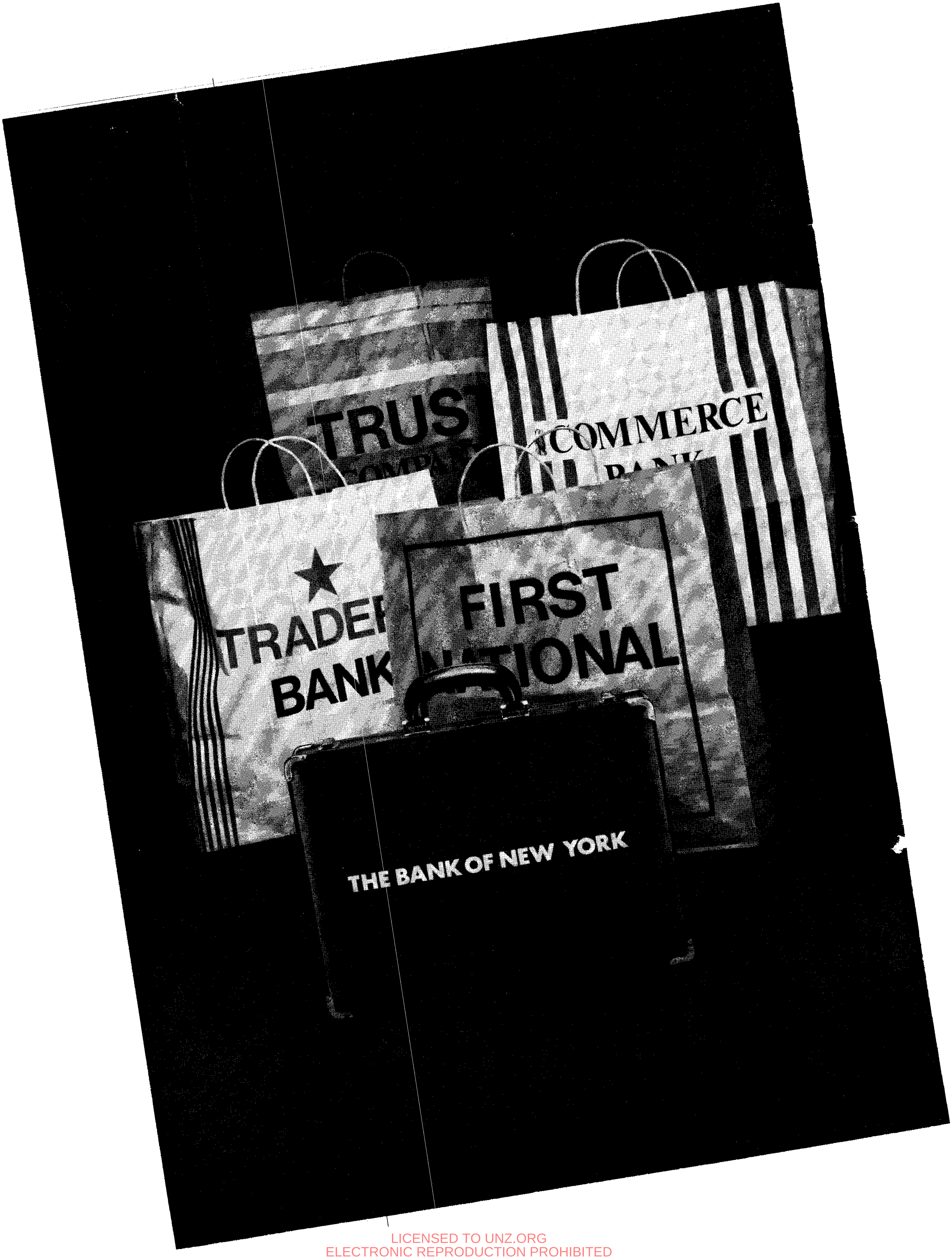
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Everest" (†) and "Downhill Racer." (†)

Feb. 22-23: "Contempt" (1964), in French, directed by Jean-Luc Godard, with Brigitte Bardot, Jack Palance, Fritz Lang, and Michel Piccoli; and "Le Gai Savoir." (†)

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Feb. 15: "His Butler's Sister" (1943), directed by Frank Borzage, with Deanna Durbin, Franchot Tone, Pat O'Brien, Evelyn Ankers, and Akim Tamiroff; and "Something in the Wind" (1947), directed by Irving Pichel, with Deanna Durbin, Donald O'Connor, John Dall, and Jan Peerce.

Feb. 16: "Counsellor-at-Law" (1933), directed by William Wyler, with John Barrymore, Bebe Daniels, and Melvyn Douglas; and "World Première" (1941), directed by Ted Tetzlaff, with John Barrymore and Frances Farmer.

Feb. 17-18: "The Great Moment" (1944), directed by Preston Sturges, with Joel McCrea, Betty Field, and Harry Carey; and "The Lady Eve." (†)

Feb. 19-20: "Twentieth Century" (1934), directed by Howard Hawks, with John Barrymore and Carole Lombard; and "It Happened One Night" (1934), directed by Frank Capra, with Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable.

Feb. 21: "The Captain Hates the Sea" (1934), directed by Lewis Milestone, with Victor McLaglen, Helen Vinson, John Gilbert, and Walter Connolly; and "The Whole Town's Talking." (†)

Feb. 22: "Star Spangled Rhythm" (†); and "Variety Girl" (1947), directed by George Marshall, with Mary Hatcher, Olga San Juan, William Demarest, and many of the stars on the Paramount lot at the time.

Feb. 23: "The Doctor Takes a Wife" (1940), directed by Alexander Hall, with Loretta Young, Ray Milland, Reginald Gardiner, Gail Patrick, and Edmund Gwenn; and "Bedtime Story" (1942), directed by Alexander Hall, with Loretta Young, Fredric March, Robert Benchley, and Allyn Joslyn.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Feb. 16 at 2:30: A program of five short Senegalese films, made in 1974-75. . . . ¶ Feb. 16 at 6: "Contras' City" (1968), directed by Djibril Diop-Mambéty, French commentary; and "Badou Boy" (1970), in French, directed by Djibril Diop-Mambéty, no English subtitles. . . . ¶ Feb. 16 at 8:30: "Touki Bouki" (1973), in Wolof, directed by Djibril Diop-Mambéty; French subtitles. . . . ¶ Feb. 17 at 2:30: "Kaddu Beykat" (1976), in Wolof, directed by Safi Faye; French subtitles. . . . ¶ Feb. 17 at 6: "Applause" (1929), directed by Rouben Mamoulian, with Helen Morgan, Fuller Mellish, Jr., and Joan Peers. . . . ¶ Feb. 18 at noon: "And Then There Were None" (1945), directed by René Clair, with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, Louis Hayward, and C. Aubrey Smith. . . . ¶ Feb. 18 at 2:30: "Kaddu Beykat.". . . ¶ Feb. 18 at 5: "The Bronze Bracelet" (1973), in Wolof, directed by Cheikh Tidiane Aw; French subtitles. . . . ¶ Feb. 19 at noon: "And Then There Were None.". . . ¶ Feb. 19 at 2:30: A program of five short Senegalese films, made in 1974-75. . . . ¶ Feb. 19 at 5: "Stage Door" (1937), directed by Gregory La Cava, with Katharine Hepburn, Ginger Rogers, and Adolphe Menjou. . . . ¶ Feb. 20 at noon: "Great Actresses of the Past" (1911-16), with Gabrielle Réjane, Sarah Bernhardt, Minnie Maddern Fiske, and Eleonora Duse. . . . ¶ Feb. 20 at 2:30: A program of three short Senegalese films. . . . ¶ Feb. 20 at 6: "The Bronze Bracelet.". . . ¶ Feb. 21 at noon: "Great Actresses of the Past.". . . ¶ Feb. 21 at 2:30: "Another Fine Mess" (1930), directed by James Parrott, with Laurel and Hardy; and "Are You There?" (1930), directed by Hamilton MacFadden, with Beatrice Lillie and Olga Baclanova. . . . ¶ Feb. 21 at 6: "How Yukong Moved the Mountains: The Generator Factory" (1973-75), in Chinese, with English voiceover, directed by Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan, the third section of a twelve-part documentary on life in the People's Republic of China. . . . ¶ Feb. 23 at 2:30: "The Bronze Bracelet.". . . ¶ Feb. 23 at 6: A program of three short Senegalese films. . . . ¶ Feb. 23 at 8:30: "Kaddu Beykat." (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through Feb. 19: "Golden Gloves—Who's the Champ" (1977), a videotape by Tom Weinberg and Scott Jacobs; and "Running with the Bulls" (1977), a videotape by Bill and Esti Marpet. . . . ¶ Starting Feb. 21: "Black at Yale" (1977), directed by Warrington Hudlin; and "I Could Hear You All the Way Down the Hall" (1977), directed by Robert Gardner. Showings at noon, 1:30, 3, and 4:30 (plus 6:15 and 8 on Tuesday evenings). Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Anthology Film Archives, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Méliès, Ozu, de Menil, Riefenstahl, Pagnol, and others. Showings Feb. 15-17 at 7 and 9; Feb. 18 at 2:30, 5, 7, and 9; Feb. 19 at 8; and Feb. 21-23 at 7 and 9:30.

Film Forum, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—Feb. 16-19: "Landscape After Battle" (1970), in Polish, directed by Andrzej Wajda; English subtitles. . . . ¶ Starting Feb. 23: "Riddles of the Sphinx" (1977), directed by Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen. Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:45.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

All Screwed Up (1974)—Lina Wertmüller finished this film early in 1974, just before starting "Swept Away." It's a noisy, sprawling, incident-filled, slice-of-life comedy-melodrama about the corruption of the Sicilians who go to Milan. Several aspects of the film, such as its poignant hero, Carletto (Nino Bignamini), and the scenes showing the monotonous dehumanization of labor, are reminiscent of René Clair's "A Nous la Liberté" (which also influenced Chaplin's "Modern Times"). But Wertmüller's point of view is chaotic. The women workers are shown to be acquisitive schemers who manipulate and exploit their men. With Lina Polito and Isa Danieli. In Italian. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/16/76.) (New Yorker; Feb. 15.)

And Now My Love (1975)—A winsome love story that believes firmly in the predetermination of love and in the gifts of Claude Lelouch. The man in the current movie (André Dussollier) is a poor but honest jailbird who turns to porno filmmaking, then to commercial filmmaking, then to a future of Lelouch-like, snow-white feature filmmaking about life, love, and death; this takes him to America, travelling first-class. The girl (Marthe Keller), rich but also honest, and very, very bored, inherits a fortune from her father (Charles Denner). She becomes a Socialist, gives away her fortune, throws on a simple mackintosh, goes to the airport (in a chauffeur-driven car), and travels to America. She, too, goes first-class, in spite of her Socialism, because she and André Dussollier have been fated to meet all through the film: in a Lelouch movie, love and the director's sense of convenience conquer all. Story and screenplay by Lelouch and Peter Uytterhoeven. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 17-18.)

Annie Hall—Woody Allen's newest film—very funny, very close to his own bone. The hero, called Alvy Singer and played by Mr. Allen, is a skinny redhead whose anxieties are not small ones. His beguiling girl is played by Diane Keaton, for whom Mr. Allen has written a splendidly funny and loving part. (4/25/77) (U.A. East; through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ Columbia I; starting Feb. 17.)

The Bad News Bears (1976)—A story of a team of sort of mini-Mets, with Tatum O'Neal as a pitcher, and Walter Matthau as a coach who feeds his team Coke and franks and pours slugs of Scotch into his cans of beer. Michael Ritchie directed, from Bill Lancaster's script. (Loews 83rd Triplex.)

The Bad News Bears in Breaking Training—Highly likable sequel to "The Bad News Bears," with the crew of unruly and matchlessly mismatched kids caught up in a ballgame in Houston that they do well at in spite of a lot of butterflies. Jackie Earle Haley, smoking hard to get around the cops' suspicion that he hasn't got a driver's license, is fine, and graceful at playing the film's characteristic born dissident. (Loews 83rd Triplex.)

Barbarella (1968)—The décor and effects in Roger Vadim's erotic comic strip are disappointing, but Jane Fonda has the skittish naughtiness of a teen-age voluptuary. She's the fresh, bouncy American girl triumphing by her innocence over a lewd, sadistic world of the future. David Hemmings shows unexpected comic talent as an absentminded revolutionary. (Olympia; through Feb. 16.)

The Betsy—Derived from the Harold Robbins novel, with Laurence Olivier, Robert Duvall, Katharine Ross, Tommy Lee Jones, and Jane Alexander; directed by Daniel Petrie. (Eastside Cinema. . . . ¶ U.A. East; starting Feb. 17.)

Blue Collar—With Richard Pryor, Harvey Keitel, Yaphet Kotto, and Cliff DeYoung; directed by Paul Schrader. (Trans-Lux East, and 86th St. East.)

Blue Country—With Brigitte Fossey, Jacques Serres, and Ginette Garcin; directed by Jean-Charles Tacchella. In French. (68th St. Playhouse.)

Bobby Deerfield—A rich-meets-rich picture, and worse than one imagines. Al Pacino gives a torpid performance as a spiritually depleted Grand Prix racing-car driver who falls in love with a well-heeled free spirit (Marthe Keller), a metaphysical kook. Though she's dying, she asks him such meaningful questions that he is restored to life. The director is Sydney Pollack. (10/3/77) (72nd Street East; through Feb. 21.)

Bonaparte (1927, 1971)—This work of Abel Gance, one of the great pioneers of film and a master of fast editing, has not had the recognition it deserves, because he was technically so far ahead of his time that theatres weren't designed or equipped to handle his films. His 1927 "Napoleon" was made in Polyvision, and those lucky enough to have seen it projected that way (or, as it sometimes was, on three ordinary screens) will recall that his conception was far more complex than what directors later did with Cinerama, since Gance frequently used the images at the left and right of the central image for contrapuntal effects. The imagery poured from the three sources; history seemed to be literally an avalanche of armies, battles, and crowds. His epic was, however, so rarely shown that in 1934 he edited another version of it, and then in 1971 prepared this version. Even though much of the visual complexity is gone, what's left is still worth seeing—sweepingly romantic, both naïve and sophisticated. Antonin Artaud appears as Marat, Gance himself as Saint-Just. (Four and a half hours.) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Feb. 20.)

The Boys in Company C—With Stan Shaw, Michael Lembeck, James Canning, Craig Wasson, and Andrew Stevens; directed by Sidney J. Furie. (Bay Cinema, and Loews Orpheum.)

Ceddo—Directed by Ousmane Sembène. In Wolof. (New Yorker; starting Feb. 16.)

The Children of Theatre Street—An American production team gets behind the scenes at Leningrad's historic ballet school (on Theatre Street), and then loses sight of its subject—the way the pupils are trained to become dancers. Colorful sidelights and some good performance shots of young dancers and old ballets, but, by and large, a wasted opportunity. (Quad Cinema.)

The Choirboys—Based on the Joseph Wambaugh novel, directed by Robert Aldrich. (St. Marks Cinema, and Playboy; through Feb. 16.)

Close Encounters of the Third Kind—This celebration of the wonders up there in the skies is the best-humored of all technological-marvel fantasies. It has visionary magic, along with a love of surprises and a skeptical, let's-try-it-on spirit. Written and directed by Steven Spielberg. (11/28/77) (Ziegfeld.)

Coma—Geneviève Bujold as a surgical resident in a Boston hospital. She discovers that large numbers of young, healthy patients have gone into irreversible comas while undergoing minor surgery, and then—vegetablized—have been packed off to a facility that provides long-term life-support systems. And single-handed, she begins to investigate. The story—about the body-snatching of the living—is essentially sleazy, yet this thriller shies away

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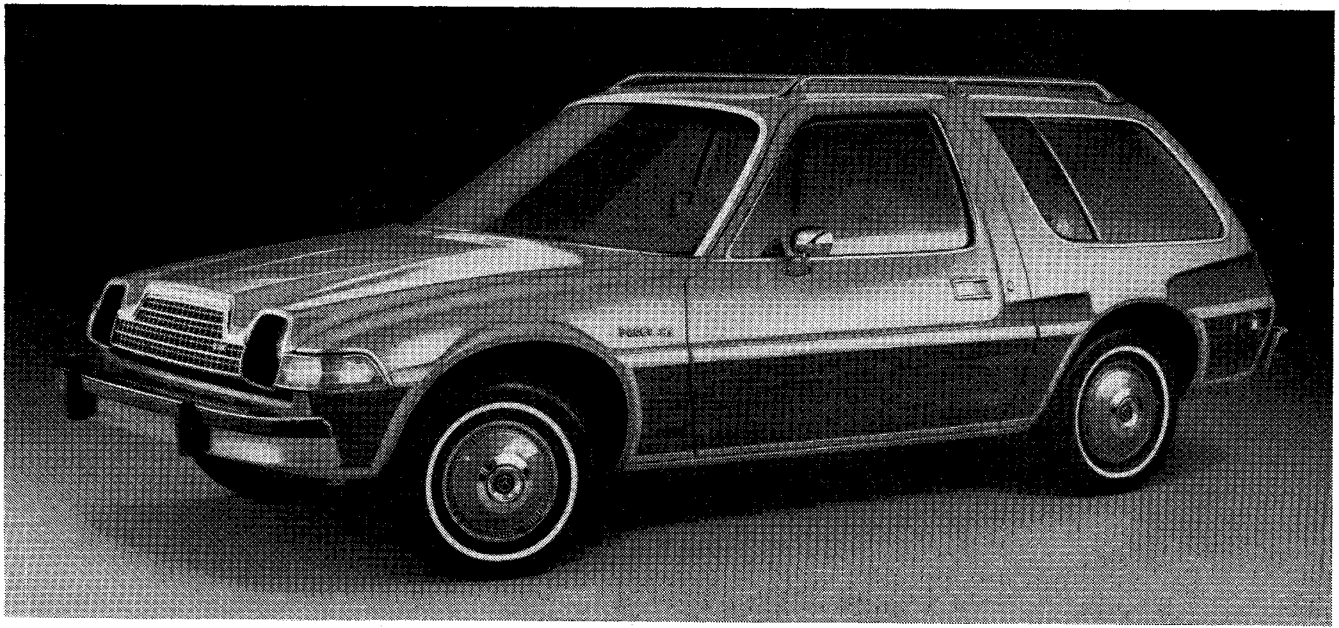

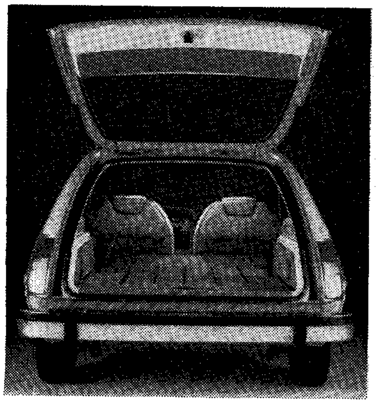

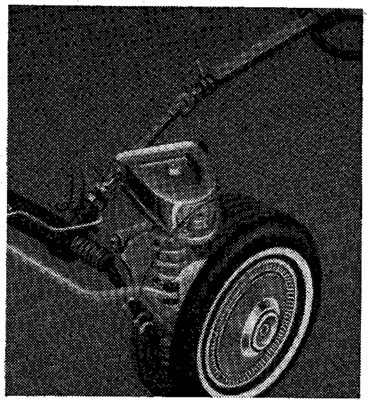

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from sleazy jokes. It glides along smoothly, as if computer-operated, and it holds you. But it doesn't give you a lift—all you get is a knot in the gut. Michael Crichton directed and did the adaptation of Robin Cook's novel. With Michael Douglas, Richard Widmark, Rip Torn, and Elizabeth Ashley. (2/6/78) (Murray Hill, and Plaza.)

Coming Home—With Jane Fonda, Jon Voight, and Bruce Dern; directed by Hal Ashby. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema I.)

Coup de Grâce—With Margarethe von Trotta and Matthias Habich, directed by Volker Schlöndorff. In German and French. (Cinema Studio.)

Dersu Uzala—A Soviet-Japanese co-production, directed by Akira Kurosawa. In Russian. (Baronet.)

Downhill Racer (1969)—The ski footage is exciting, and the movie is fast and relatively unassuming. Robert Redford is a poor boy determined to be an Olympic champion; unfortunately, the movie doesn't provide many clues to *why*, or to what the championship in this particular event means. Directed by Michael Ritchie. (Thalia; Feb. 19-21.)

The Duellists—An adaptation of Joseph Conrad's Napoleonic-period story "The Duel," about a cavalry officer's sudden flare-up of rage over a trifling, imagined insult by another officer, which grows into a private war. The hussars (Harvey Keitel and Keith Carradine) go on fighting for over fifteen years, and the origin of the quarrel becomes lost in legend. This English production—a first film by the director Ridley Scott—is consistently entertaining and eerily beautiful; its special quality is in its Géricault-like compositions. The mixed American and British cast includes Cristina Raines, Albert Finney, Alan Webb, Edward Fox, Diana Quick, Jenny Runacre, Robert Stephens, Tom Conti, and Meg Wynn Owen. (1/23/78) (Fine Arts.)

The End of the World in Our Usual Bed in a Night Full of Rain—Except for flashbacks, Lina Wertmüller's first film in English takes place during one very wet night. A Communist Italian journalist (Giancarlo Giannini) and a rich American feminist photojournalist (Candice Bergen) have been married ten years, and in all that time they've been having sexual intercourse only in the missionary position. On this night, she suggests that she'd like to try something else, and there's much dishevelment, hysteria, shrieking, and running out into the rain—and the marriage collapses. The entire film has a tutti-frutti romanticism, and parts of it rank with such classics of camp as "Youngblood Hawke" and "The Barefoot Contessa." (2/6/78) (Loews Tower East.)

Fortune and Men's Eyes (1971)—Based on John Herbert's play about prison and homosexuality, with Wendell Burton and Michael Greer. Directed by Harvey Hart. (St. Marks Cinema; Feb. 17-21.)

Le Gai Savoir (1968)—"Weekend" was the culmination of Godard's great, innovative, rampaging career, and after it he seemed to be back at Square One, trying to found a new Maoist political cinema. This was the first of his monotonous, didactic experiments, and it's just about impossible to sit through. Juliet Berto (as the daughter of Lumumba) and Jean-Pierre Léaud (as Rousseau's great-great-grandson) begin on a course of study; there's not much to look at, and since the sound track is full of bleeps to cover the obscenities, there's nothing to do but read the subtitles as the two of them talk. In French. (Thalia; Feb. 22-23.)

Gigi (1958)—A handsome and melodious adaptation of the Colette tale about a young lady who is tutored to be a courtesan and winds up the betrothed of the richest young fellow in Paris. Book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, music by Frederick Loewe, costumes by Cecil Beaton, and a fine cast, headed by Leslie Caron, Maurice Chevalier, and Louis Jourdan. Vincente Minnelli directed, in a confident, confectionery style. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Feb. 21. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 23.)

The Goodbye Girl—The prolific Neil Simon is at it again; this time it's a tearful comedy with Marsha Mason and Richard Dreyfuss. She says gratuitously abrasive things to him, and he prisses his lips and tells her off. Herbert Ross directed. (1/16/78) (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, Quad Cinema, and Loews 83rd Triplex. . . . ¶ Festival; through Feb. 21.)

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A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich—With Cicely Tyson, Paul Winfield, and Larry Scott; directed by Ralph Nelson. (Columbia I; through Feb. 16.)

High Anxiety—Mel Brooks' rehash of some of Hitchcock's most famous thriller effects. This is a child's idea of satire—imitations, with a funny hat and a leer. There isn't a whisper of suspense, and there are few earned laughs; all Brooks does is let us know he has seen some of the same movies we have. With Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman, Harvey Korman, and Ron Carey. (1/9/78) (Sutton, Cinema 3, and Paramount.)

Hour of the Wolf (1968)—A very fine Ingmar Bergman film about the impingement of two personalities upon each other, like "Persona" and "The Silence." Max von Sydow plays an obsessed painter, and Liv Ullmann his deeply troubled wife. In Swedish. (Cinema Village; Feb. 22-23.)

Inserts (1976)—The script, by the young writer-director John Byrum, is a long one-act play, reminiscent of Michael McClure's "The Beard." The action takes place on one set, which represents a house in Hollywood around 1930, where The Boy Wonder (Richard Dreyfuss), a once-famous director, now shoots stag movies. The plot twists are poorly motivated, and the callow dialogue makes the whole thing seem like a kid's show. With Jessica Harper, and, as the stag-movie star, the talented Veronica Cartwright, who flings herself into her role in the dissolute, romantic manner of Jeanne Eagels. X-rated. (3/15/76) (Cinema Village; Feb. 21.)

Julia—Jane Fonda as Lillian Hellman, Jason Robards as Dashiell Hammett, and Vanessa Redgrave as Julia in the film version of Hellman's story about her smuggling bribe money into Nazi Germany, from her book of memoirs "Pentimento." Directed by Fred Zinnemann, from a script by Alvin Sargent, it has been made in conservative—classical humanist—style. The film's constraint is frustrating, because Jane Fonda has the power and invention to go further in the character. (10/10/77) (Quad Cinema, Festival, and Loews 83rd Triplex; starting Feb. 22.)

The Lacemaker—With Isabelle Huppert and Yves Beneyton, directed by Claude Goretta. In French. (Gramercy, and Embassy 72nd St.; through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ Art; through Feb. 21.)

The Lady Eve (1941)—A frivolous masterpiece. Like "Bringing Up Baby," "The Lady Eve" is a mixture of visual and verbal slapstick, and of high artifice and pratfalls. Barbara Stanwyck keeps sticking out a sensational leg, and Henry Fonda keeps tripping over it. She's a cardsharp, and he's a millionaire scientist who knows more about snakes than about women; neither performer has ever been funnier. The film, with screenplay and direction by Preston Sturges, is full of classic moments and classic lines; it represents the dizzy high point of Sturges's comedy writing. With Charles Coburn, Eugene Pallette, William Demarest, and Eric Blore. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 17-18.)

Looking for Mr. Goodbar—Diane Keaton as Theresa Dunn, the teacher who cruises singles bars and is murdered by a man she picks up. Richard Brooks, who adapted the novel by Judith Rossner and directed, has laid a windy jeremiad about our permissive society on top of fractured film syntax. With Tuesday Weld, Alan Feinstein, Richard Gere, and Richard Kiley. (10/24/77) (Gramercy; Feb. 17-21.)

The Man Who Loved Women—The dedicated skirt-chaser of Truffaut's film is meant to be irresistibly charming, but his compulsion looks about as exciting as building a two-foot replica of the Pentagon with toothpicks. With Charles Denner, Nelly Borgeaud, Brigitte Fossey, and Leslie Caron. In French. (12/5/77) (Paris.)

The Man Who Skied Down Everest (1976)—An Oscar-winning Japanese documentary about the celebrated skier Miura, who toiled most of the way up Everest with a caravan of Sherpas and scientists, and then skied down part of it, at a hundred miles an hour. Six Sherpas died. Was it really worth six men's lives for anyone to demonstrate a singular, Oscar-winning accomplishment? There is a difference between an endeavor and a feat. (6/7/76) (Thalia; Feb. 19-21.)

Mr. Klein—Joseph Losey directed this French quasi-thriller set in Paris in 1942, during the Occupation. It's about a fashionable art dealer (Alain Delon), an Aryan, who buys up treasures from fleeing Jews and then, through what may or may not be a bureaucratic mistake, becomes confused with another Mr. Klein, a non-Aryan. This is a classic example of Losey's weighty emptiness; the atmosphere is heavily pregnant, with no delivery. With Jeanne Moreau and Michel Lonsdale; written by Franco Solinas. In French. (2/6/78) (Quad Cinema; through Feb. 16.)

Murder (1930)—A rarely seen, handsomely designed early Hitchcock whodunit set among theatre people, not in the class of his mid-thirties work, but with inventive tricks. Herbert Marshall (in his first talking picture) is a fancy big-time actor serving on a jury; convinced of the innocence of the young actress (Norah Baring) who is on trial for murder, he tries to solve the case in order to save her life. There are some snobbish bits that appear to ridicule the "lower orders"—apparently, these are the unfortunate results of attempts at improvisation. Hitchcock experimented with a stream-of-consciousness monologue, and there's a tricky sequence in which Marshall listens to "Tristan" on the radio while he shaves. The actual murderer turns out to be a transvestite—daring at the time, but all too familiar a scapegoat now. (Regency; Feb. 21-22.)

North by Northwest (1959)—Hitchcock's amusing, improbable thriller, with confused identities, mad geography, and a classic sequence—the crop-dusting airplane trying to dust Cary Grant. With Eva Marie Saint and James Mason. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 19-20.)

Los Olvidados ("The Young and the Damned;" 1950)—A masterwork. The poor prey on each other in Luis Buñuel's ruthless examination of poverty and delinquency in Mexico. With some classic surreal sequences. In Spanish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 22.)

The One and Only—With Henry Winkler and Kim Darby, directed by Carl Reiner. (34th St. East, and Loews Ciné.)

Operation Thunderbolt—About the July, 1976, Israeli rescue at Entebbe. Directed by Menahem Golan. (Guild.)

Padre Padrone—The Taviani brothers' film version of Gavino Ledda's 1974 autobiography fuses political commitment and artistic commitment into stylized passion. Ledda's story is about how he was enslaved as a child, imprisoned in a sheepfold, and forced to tend the family flock, and of how he fought his way out of the isolation and silence. The spirit of the film isn't naturalistic—it's animistic—and the Tavianis' technique is deliberately barbaric. The grotesquely natural cruelty is mythological—almost rhapsodic. In Italian. (10/3/77) (Cinema II.)

The Postman Always Rings Twice (1946)—Entertaining trash, though overlong. The director, Tay Garnett, knew enough tricks to sustain this glossily bowdlerized version of the James M. Cain tabloid novel, and he used Lana Turner maybe better than any other director did. Cain's women are, typically, calculating, hot little animals, and his men doom-ridden victims. Here, Lana Turner's Cora—infantile in a bored, helpless, premoral way—is dressed in impeccable white, as if to conceal her sweaty passions and murderous impulses; John Garfield plays the drifter who becomes her lover. Cora's harmless husband (Cecil Kellaway) seems a nuisance to have around, so they decide to finish him off while he's relaxing in the bathtub. The shoddy, ironic twist signified in the title is that the killers get away with their crime but retribution comes anyway. As opposing lawyers, Hume Cronyn and Leon Ames have a showoffy courtroom clash. With Audrey Totter. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 19-20.)

Renaldo & Clara—Bob Dylan made this three-hour-and-fifty-two-minute film, which was mostly shot during a Bicentennial (1975-76) tour. (The show was called the "Rolling Thunder Revue.") The performance footage is handsomely photographed, but it doesn't

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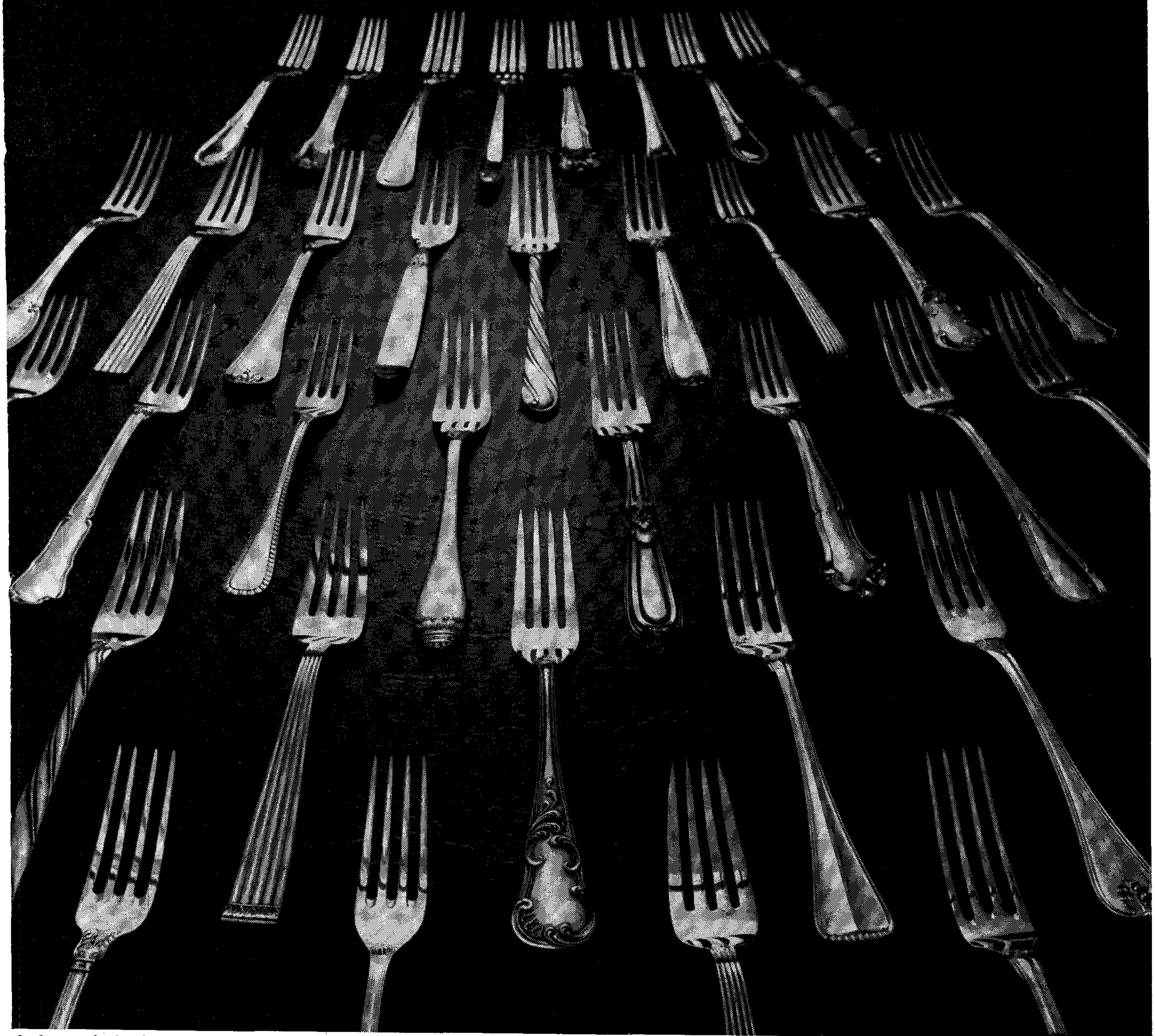

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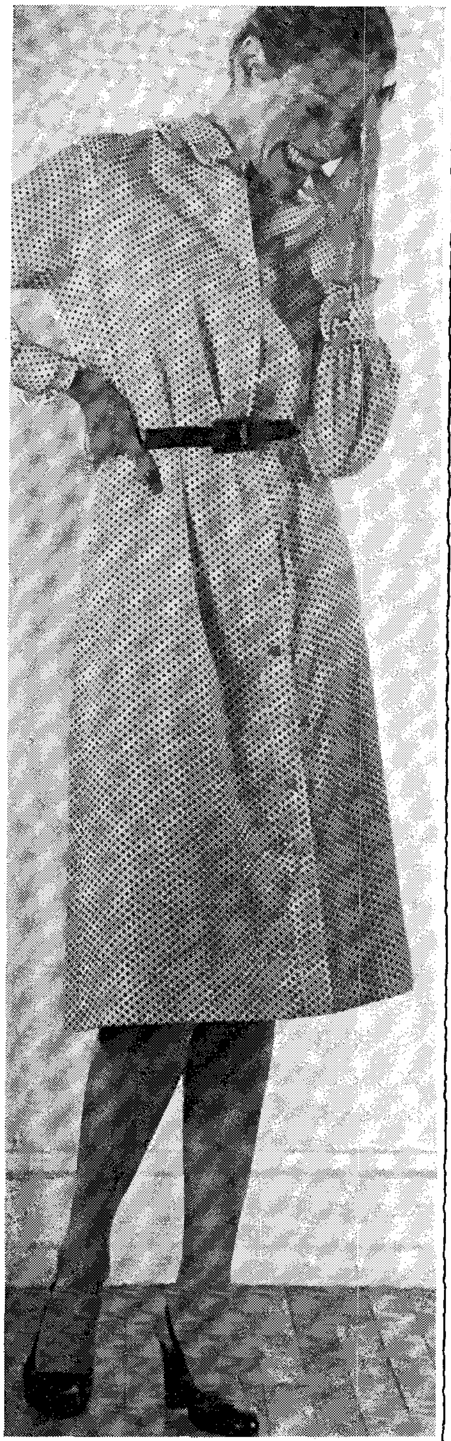

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build up the excitement that one can sometimes feel at a performance film, because the movie keeps cutting away from the stage to cinéma-vérité fantasies of Dylan's life, which occupy more than two-thirds of the running time. Dylan has given himself more tight closeups than any actor can have had in the whole history of movies. (2/13/78) (Waverly.)

Saturday Night Fever—How the financially pinched seventies generation that grew up on TV attempts to find its own forms of beauty and release. John Travolta plays Tony, a nineteen-year-old Italian Catholic who works selling paint in a hardware store in Brooklyn's Bay Ridge; on Saturday nights, he's off to the local disco dream palace, where he's the champion dancer. Karen Lynn Gorney plays opposite Travolta as Stephanie who is trying to climb out of Brooklyn and onto Manhattan, which is seen as the magic isle of opportunity—not ironically but with the old Gershwin spirit. John Badham directed. (12/26/77) (D. W. Griffith. . . . ¶ Art, Gramercy, 72nd Street East, and Olympia; starting Feb. 22.)

The Savage Is Loose (1974)—George C. Scott, Trish Van Devere, and John David Carson, as their son, are shipwrecked on a jungle island, and so is the audience. Agonizing. Scott directed. (59th St. East.)

The Seduction of Mimi (1972)—Written and directed by Lina Wertmüller. A farce, set in Italy and Sicily, about a sexual round robin, with the Mafia intervening. The hero is dead serious, above a subterranean freneticism, about his cold wife in Sicily and his Cranach-faced mistress in Turin and Catania. His wife vengefully gets pregnant by a tax officer; the hero makes love back to the tax officer's mountainous wife, who already has five children before this sixth one by him. The Mafia plants a murder on him, and he emerges from a jail sentence to find even his mistress and their beloved growing son disappearing into the distance. In Italian. (New Yorker; Feb. 15.)

Semi-Tough—Starting from Dan Jenkins' popular 1972 novel, an anecdotal burlesque about professional football players, the director Michael Ritchie and the screenwriter Walter Bernstein made a movie that's a loose series of riffs on the human-potential, consciousness-raising movement, with the two football stars (Burt Reynolds and Kris Kristofferson) involved in a romantic comedy triangle with the team owner's daughter (Jill Clayburgh). The movie is like a low-grade fever—you slip in and out of it painlessly. (12/12/77) (Trans-Lux 85th St., and Greenwich; through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Triplex; through Feb. 21.)

The Serpent's Egg—Set in Berlin in 1923, this Ingmar Bergman film, made in English in Munich, is about a Jewish-American trapeze artist (David Carradine) and his sister-in-law (Liv Ullmann), who are entrapped by a mad doctor (Heinz Bennent)—a prophet who dreams of what the Nazis will accomplish in the thirties. The movie, which fills the screen with images of fear and blood, of head-splitting pain and death, and then throws in gothic political theories, is a crackpot tragedy. Everything is strained, insufficient, underfelt. (1/30/78) (Coronet.)

Shame (1968)—Ingmar Bergman's simple, masterly vision of normal war and what it does to survivors. Set a tiny step into the future, the film has the inevitability of a common dream. Liv Ullmann is superb in the demanding central role—one that calls for emotional involvements with her husband (Max von Sydow) and her lover (Gunnar Björnstrand). In Swedish. (Cinema Village; Feb. 22-23.)

Short Eyes—Robert M. Young directed Miguel Piñero's adaptation of his own play—an insider's view of life in a men's house of detention, centering on the revulsion that prisoners feel toward child-molesters ("short eyes"). Parts of this disorganized, somewhat pedestrian movie seem as good as they could possibly be. Shot entirely in the Tombs. (9/26/77) (Olympia; through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ St. Marks Cinema; Feb. 17-21.)

Simon of the Desert (1965)—A saint (Claudio Brook) is tempted by the Devil in the guise of a woman (Silvia Pinal); he falls, of course, in Luis Buñuel's short, witty divertissement on the foolishness of saintliness. In Spanish. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Feb. 22.)

Slap Shot (1977)—Fast, noisy, profane comedy set in the world of minor-league ice hockey. The director, George Roy Hill, gets you laughing, all right, but you don't necessarily enjoy yourself; the picture is geared to giving the public "what it wants"—and there's an antagonistic feeling behind it. What holds the film together is the warmth supplied by Paul Newman, who, as Reggie, a player-coach, gives the performance of his life—to date. (3/7/77) (St. Marks Cinema; through Feb. 16.)

A Special Day—A schematic romance that takes place in Rome on May 8, 1938, during Hitler's visit with Mussolini. Sophia Loren is an oppressed working-class housewife, the mother of six children, and Marcello Mastroianni is a suspected homosexual who has just been dismissed as a radio announcer and is about to be interned in Sardinia. Their humiliation draws them together. Directed by Ettore Scola. In Italian. (10/17/77) (Embassy 72nd St.; starting Feb. 17, tentative.)

Star Spangled Rhythm (1942)—One of those big-studio inventory pictures, in this case a census of the entire Paramount lot. Even the scenery consists largely of the Paramount offices and grounds. Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, Fred MacMurray, and so on and on. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 22.)

That Obscure Object of Desire—Luis Buñuel's style here is peerlessly urbane, but the film is a little monotonous. Fernando Rey plays a rich, worldly French widower of perhaps fifty, who loves a young Spanish girl; she alternates between promises and postponement—she teases him, fleeces him, enrages him. She is played by two actresses—Carole Bouquet, a tall French girl, and Angela Molina, a shorter, more rounded Spanish girl. In French. (12/19/77) (Columbia II.)

The Turning Point—A backstage-ballet milieu, with Anne Bancroft as a gallant, aging ballerina and Shirley MacLaine as her friend and rival, who quit to raise a family. The script is by Arthur Laurents, who writes sodden expository dialogue in which these two are forever revealing truths to each other. We get a glimpse of something great in the movie—Mikhail Baryshnikov dancing—and these two harpies out of the soaps block the view. Herbert Ross directed, unassertively and unexcitedly. With Leslie Browne, Tom Skerritt, Alexandra Danilova, Anthony Zerbe, and Martha Scott, and Suzanne Farrell, Peter Martins, and other dancers. (11/21/77) (Beekman, R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1, Quad Cinema, and Little Carnegie.)

Two Women (1961)—A young widow, Sophia Loren, takes her teen-age daughter out of wartime Rome to her native village and then starts back home too soon; both mother and daughter are raped by Moroccan soldiers. Emotional, even shattering, but far from depressing. With Jean-Paul Belmondo and Eleanora Brown, directed by Vittorio De Sica. In Italian. (Regency; starting Feb. 23.)

Uncle Vanya (1971)—A marvellous Russian film of the Chekhov play, directed by Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky with the now familiar Soviet exactness and fondness for the realities of czarist-period literature. Uncle Vanya is played by Smoktunovsky, who was latterly the Russian Hamlet. Sergei Bondarchuk, director of the monumental Russian "War and Peace" and the man who played Pierre in it, is here as Dr. Astrov, a man whose lined, white face seems haunted by thoughts of the promises to himself that he has broken. The characters' spurts of stoic umbrage directed against their own failings are entirely Chekhovian. In Russian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Feb. 23.)

The Whole Town's Talking (1935)—Early John Ford melodrama-comedy about a toughie girl called Bill (Jean Arthur), whom a mild clerk dotes on. Edward G. Robinson is in the picture in a double part, playing both the clerk and a twin-faced gangster. Like many of Ford's movies, the film sweetens the air with its lack of violence and its feeling for human detail. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 21.)

Wizards—A full-length animated cartoon by the unique Ralph Bakshi, of "Fritz the Cat" and "Heavy Traffic." This new color film, graphically innovative, is a fable about a future world divided between the forces of a good brother and a bad. One misses Bakshi's former pungent sense of the crude beauty of Manhattan; instead, we see a master craftsman making cartoon armies rush around like charges of cavalry in the Russian "War and Peace." The first cartoon that has the quality of a good epic. (Cinema Village; Feb. 19-20.)

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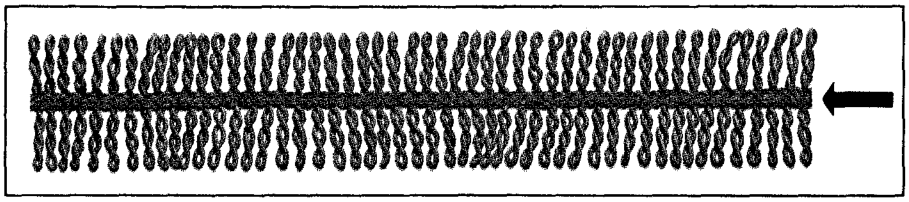

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THE NEW YORKER

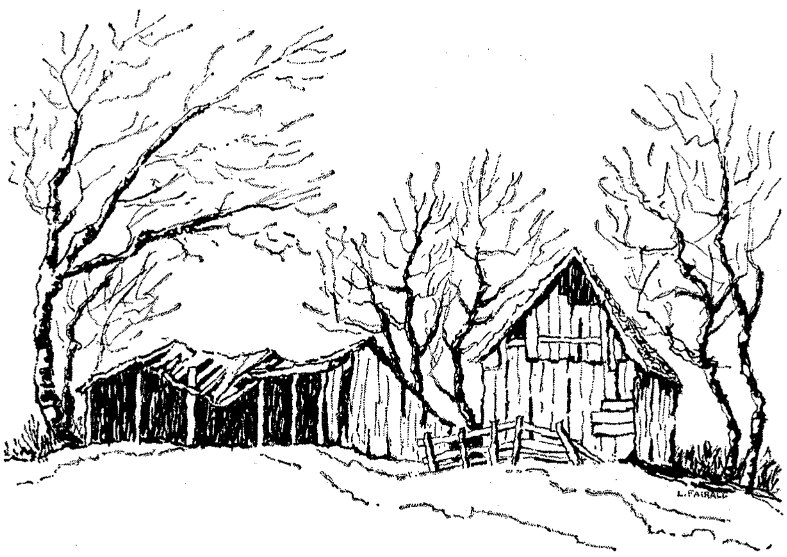
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

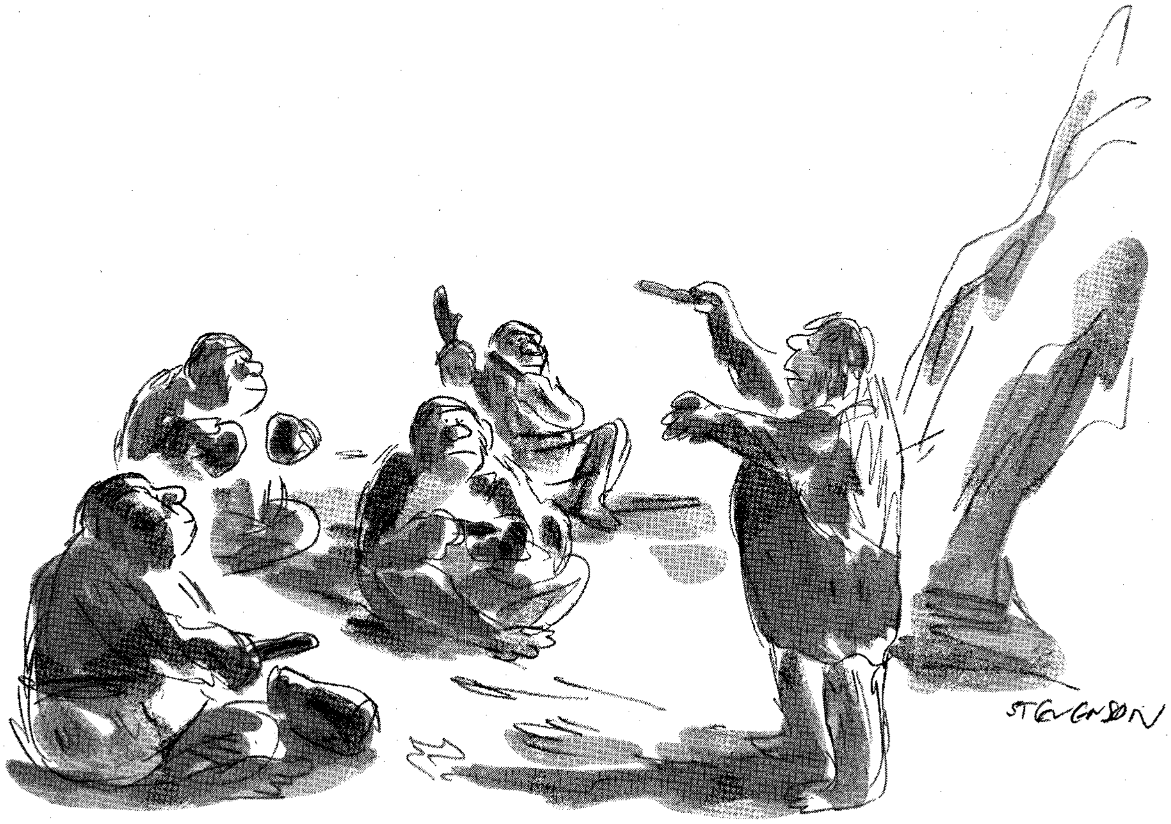
Notes and Comment

WE have received a number of letters about the big snowstorm last week. This one is from a man we know who is in his fifties and lives in the East Nineties:

On the second day of the storm—the real day of it, not the warmup—I looked out my living-room window in the middle of the morning and suddenly decided that I had to go to the office. There was no reason for this, because, like most offices in town that day, mine was closed, and I had nothing much to do when I got there anyway—*if* I got there. But something drove me out just the same, and I bundled into several layers of clothes and stuffed my pant legs into my good old leather-topped, rubber-bottomed Bean boots and put on an old ski cap (a skating cap these past few years, if truth be told), and said goodbye to my wife, who said I was crazy, and went out into the sudden swirls of blowing snow and falling snow, and slogged my way around the corner, leaning and staggering by turns against the shove and tug of the wind, onto Madison Avenue. I grabbed a bus-stop stanchion there, for support, and in that instant I could feel something like the full power of the wind, which was rapping and banging the metal bus-stop signs over my head, and which made the pole strain and quiver like the mast of a ship blown onto its beam-ends in a gale. Frightful weather, yet I was anything but alone in it. Storekeepers and supers were shovelling away all around me, scraping and clanging their big shovels and sending up clouds of snow, even though it was plain that the storm was gaining on them every minute. A lot of them seemed to have young volunteer helpers—school kids off from school, manning the pumps. I made it over to Fifth, sometimes walking on pavements blown bare by the wind and sometimes plunging the Bean boots out of sight into the drifts. I became aware of the deep, furnacelike sounds of my own breathing, and I paused now and then and stared at the giant white wind-rippled, wind-fingered Arp-shapes of buried cars along the way. When I got to the Avenue, I saw that the plows had been right on the job this time. There was a narrow almost clear lane down the middle of the street, and now and then a solitary car or cab clanked slowly by, making interesting, fishlike sidewise movements and leaving interesting, wind-tunnel flake effects in its wake. There were six or seven huddled, bundled-up men—or possibly women, or possibly leftover peasant extras from some crowd scene in "Doctor Zhivago"—waiting at the bus stop, and the word was yes, there were some buses still running. So I stood there, in good company, on a lumpy snow mound at Fifth and Ninetieth, with the wind and the cold and the snow all blowing and hurrying about, and with the lovely old Park trees above me all creaking and swaying, and their black branches rubbing and scratching together, and with the bridle-path dirt showing black through the snow in one bare place; and then more people shapes appeared through the snow-gray mist (some of them making great curbside leaps through the piled-up snow, like deer leaping in the winter woods), and I knew all at once what had driven me out on this ridiculous trip on such an unlikely day: it was joy. I don't think the joy was just the good ordinary morning feeling of being out in new snow on a weekday, when most people are sensibly at home, and I don't think it was the kind of holiday joy that comes of thinking about all the children being at home that day, because of no school, and my still remembering what *that* was like—how it was to savor a whole day ahead with nothing to do but go to the Park and play in the snow, or else not even do that but just stay at home and do nothing all day and not be told what you had to do next. This was different.

I went on thinking about the feeling after the bus came and we all clambered and crowded aboard and the bus went slowly poking along downtown, with the wipers clacking and the big wheels slithering and crunching and squeaking in the snow beneath us, and nobody in the bus sore or in a hurry, because nobody was getting anywhere on time that day. Standing up in the back, I looked out the bus windows, sometimes leaning over and wiping away the fog on a cold window with





"Let's take it again from 'klonk.'"

• •

my glove, and I saw that the streets seemed to be full of condensation—vast steamy clouds of it billowing out of sewers and manholes, and ragged puffs of it rising from the fountain ponds in front of the Metropolitan Museum (no fountains today), which were ruffly with snow squalls, and I saw that more and more people had come out in the storm and were heading for the Park, in gigantic boots and wild hats and stripy scarves and snow-clotted mittens, and carrying cross-country skis, a lot of them, and then skiing away along the buried paths or under the trees in the Park, and there was joy in that, too, of course.

But I am getting this wrong, writing it like this, because it sounds as if the joy were simply because of the snow and the weather, as if it were just the weather and nothing more, and it wasn't—not all of it, anyway. It was the event that mattered. Something was happening, and it was happening to me and to everybody else, and that made me think that perhaps at my time of life (or perhaps just in this city at this time in the world) almost nothing ever really *happens*, and that is why days slip away so dully and anxiously and scarily now, most of the time—almost all the time. But on this morning I felt time passing and I didn't mind it at all. I loved it. In that wind and in the swirling flakes amid the rising steam and in the slow, rocking, boatlike movements of the big bus, I felt that time was passing and taking me with it. I felt the movement of the day and the year going by, and me moving inside it, and that double motion was beautiful. And then it occurred to me that perhaps it is never right to think, *Time is passing*, the way I usually do, because that suggests that we are stationary—like some rock or ledge being worked on by the movement of wind and tide. The fact is that we are moving as well—moving at a speed too great for us ever to understand it and almost too great for us even to notice it—and a day is coming, of course, sweeping up on us in a wind, when we won't be there to feel it, or to feel time at all. Perhaps it would be more reasonable for us to feel that time may be a stationary place through which we are all moving, together and alone. Days like the day of the storm will come again, other special days, and maybe the joy of them is in barely sensing this movement—the tiny backward tilt under our feet, the unexpected weight in our heels—that makes us take a little half step and grab for the overhead handle as the bus goes on. This feeling, I should add, is very different from the way I used to feel just a few years ago, when so *many* days seemed fresh and full of happenings, and every day seemed to go on forever. This is better.

One thing more. I have begun to notice that these sudden and uninvited surges of joy have come on me more frequently in the past few years, and have often been followed by abrupt downturns, feelings of sadness and loss, which have usually lasted longer than the good parts. I am a grownup, and I know what *that* may mean. Like many middle-aged people, I have had a few friends, good friends, who unexpectedly started to become too happy, or happier than any of us have any reason to expect, and who then got sad—sadder than sad. Tears and drawn blinds. Whispered calls to Dr. Meserve. They were taken away, and by one means or another it was arranged for them to become less sad, and less happy, too. Pills were prescribed, or sometimes they were plugged into surprising machines that lit up their eyes to an unbearable brightness for an instant or two and then dimmed them to a more acceptable level, and in time the good friends returned and talked apologetically and amusingly about what they had subjected us to back then when they were so glad and so sad. They were no longer quite the same friends we had remembered. All this is no news, but it came as news to me that I had to think about such things there in the bus in the snowstorm, because of a morning of joy and a few minutes of intimation. I didn't become sad during the rest of the bus trip, or any time that day, it turned out, but I had begun to watch myself again, the way I always do—maybe the way we all do: I don't know. What had been happening had stopped. Watch it there, Mac. Allegro non troppo.

ANOTHER letter was from a young man who lives on Riverside Drive:

As I made my way home from work through the snowy, half-deserted streets of midtown Manhattan on the first afternoon of last week's big storm, I began to experience combined feelings of edginess and euphoria which were hauntingly similar to sensations of the not so distant past—sensations whose cause remained stubbornly buried for a long while in the depths of my brain. Finally, when I got in from the cold, and was looking out on the winter scene from the comfort of my apartment, it was the sweltering summer scenes of last July's blackout which rose before my mind's eye and identified themselves as the unlikely hidden association. Back then, too, at least one full day in the life of the city had been knocked out by the weather. That time, the culprits had been the sun and the heat, and now they were the cold and the snow, but there was the same feeling of unexpected-holiday fun tinged with nervousness and dismay, the same ambivalent wish that the crisis would end quickly but at the same time break all records for that type of crisis, the same counterpointing of the visible, present, natural disaster with news stories of the looming, intangible, man-made disaster of municipal bankruptcy, and the same paradoxical realization that natural adversities that might be only minor inconveniences in the countryside, where nature supposedly had full dominion, were transformed into major crises in the big cities, where nature was supposed to be well under control, if not entirely fenced in and paved over. Also, there was the same brave show of being on top of things by a city administration that was in fact largely helpless. (It was probably to create the desired appearance of mastery that City Hall called its headquarters for snow clearance the Snow Command Post—a name that seemed to make its head, Sanitation Commissioner Anthony Vaccarello, the Commander-in-Chief of the Snow, empowered, presumably, to instruct the winds where to blow and the snowflakes where to fall.)

As I listened to the almost non-stop radio coverage of the storm, it occurred to me that the weather in general seemed to have increased its clout considerably in the last half decade or so. Some of the change, I recognized, reflected nothing more than stepped-up news coverage. On local television, especially, the behavior of the weather—the oldest story on earth—had become urgent news. The weathermen, now called meteorologists, and often respectfully addressed as "Dr. X" or "Dr. Y," were being allowed more air time and more vigorous personalities than almost anyone else on the news programs. With their maps, pointers, and satellite photographs, and their highly technical talk of fronts, pressure zones, and wind-chill factors, they were delivering what had become in effect nightly graduate seminars on the weather. Indeed, the new Happy Talk News formats that had recently been adopted by television stations all across the country made the weather reports, which had once provided little breathers from the serious news, almost seem to add a note of gravity to otherwise increasingly silly proceedings. But if journalistic ratings wars were part of the reason for the weather's new prominence, it was also true that the weather seemed to be impinging on people's lives in some new ways. The winter cold first put the country on notice of its new powers early in 1974, during the Arab oil embargo, when the gasoline pumps were close to dry and when many businesses were compelled to shut their doors and many homes to go without gas and oil. With the New York blackout, the summer heat showed what it could do. It was turning out that widespread reliance on air-conditioning, central heating, automobiles, and other devices whose purpose, at least in part, was to protect us from the weather had left us open to attacks by the weather from another direction. The country's estimation of the weather reflected the new events. Somehow, the winter cold seems colder when you know that it

can exhaust the fuel supply, and the summer heat seems hotter when you know that it can blow out the power system. Not any increase in the ferocity of nature, then, but a new frailty resulting from human artifice is what makes the weathermen chatter on about the wind-chill factor, and what made me think last week of the blazing sun of July while I watched the February snow.

STILL another letter was from a young woman in the Village:

Ash Wednesday fell this year on the day after the forty-hour blizzard, a teasing, lovely, giggly day, full of warm sunshine, impudent breezes, and running waters: the gratuitous good mood of a person who has got away with something—a temper tantrum, a bit of preposterous mischief. The storm knows what it is doing, said somebody. Lent is such a fine invention—perfectly timed, wise to human needs. Just the remembrance of Lenten disciplines is a relief from the idea of self-denial for reasons of narcissism (the fast versus the diet) and of introspection for reasons of "human potential" (reflection versus the primal scream). In the secular world in which I live, it is perfectly possible for Lent to pass all but unnoticed: one day some people on the street have ashes on their foreheads, and a while later it is suddenly Easter. But I do not consider myself liberated by this oblivion. I feel more like a person who has lost the beat. Lent is associated in my mind—though I suppose this is a subversion of its true purpose—with a quite personal kind of freedom and also with a sharpened sensitivity. The Lenten food my mother served when I was growing up was savory: lentil soup; pickled herring; beet greens with oil and vinegar; pumpernickel and cheese—no butter. Small portions, precious, intently tasted: special food that made one aware of the specialness of food, just as the creation of a special time made one aware of the specialness, the deliciousness of time. In the convent school I attended during my high-school years, we rose each morning at six for Mass—a Spartan custom that was reinforced during Lent by the unadorned altar and sombre texts. But all this was balanced against what was happening outside the chapel windows. In midwinter, Mass began in darkness and ended in the gray light of dawn, but during Lent the sun would begin its early rising in earnest, and through the chapel windows one would on some days see melting snows and streaming tree trunks and, spreading across the sea beyond the hockey field, a sunlight that was definitely honeyed. Those were the beginnings of days such as Ash Wednesday was this year—deliriously seductive, shamelessly false. The false springs of February. Lent defies the conventional division of the seasons. It brackets one of the most difficult, extraordinary periods of the yearly cycle—the transition from winter to spring. We need Lent to get us through that—a rhythm in a confusing season, something to steady our focus. One of the reasons I miss daily Mass is that it provided a very private space in which to recollect oneself during that vulnerable period of unique awareness between sleep and full awakedness—a space that more modern rituals clutter with the "Today Show" and the *Times*. Lent as I remember it provided something similar on a larger scale—a protected time in which to recollect oneself to oneself as the earth, after many a false start, gorgeously, painfully thawed.

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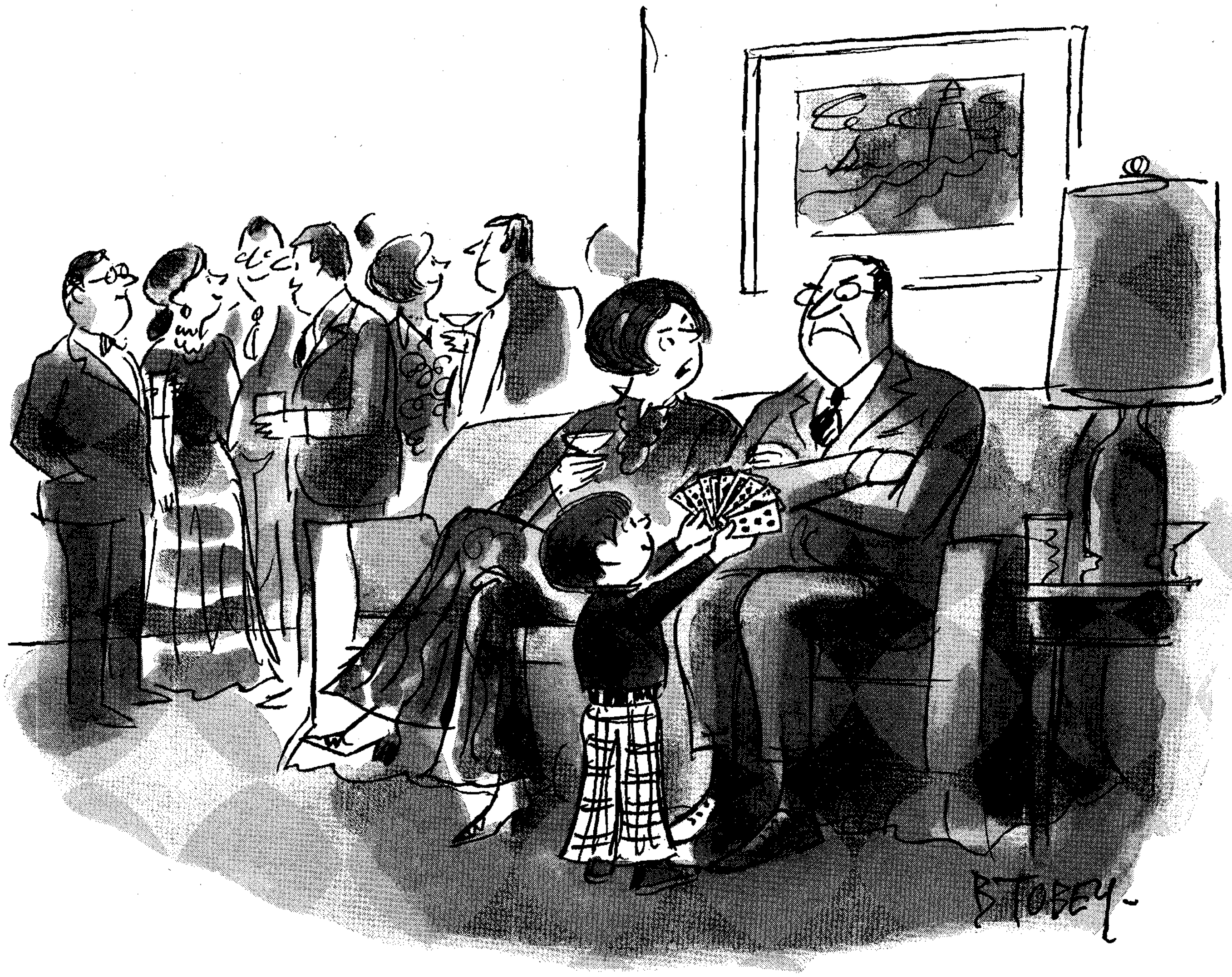
At the Diet and Nutrition Expo in the Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda

"THE Miracle Ultra-Matic Stainless Steel Automatic Pulp Ejector Vegetable and Fruit Juicer is the best juicer you can buy, I don't care what you pay! For two hundred twenty-five dollars you get a juicer that'll last ten years! I've had people come in to me with the top-of-the-line six-hundred-dollar Norwalk juicer and offer to trade with me for this one even up. In this juicer you're buying the only kind of juicer that you're really going to get involved with. Believe me, friends, you won't get really involved with any other kind of juicer!" ("Remember scoring your first touchdown or getting your first base hit, how great you felt about yourself and the whole world? Hi, I'm John Brodie. Did you ever wonder where those feelings went? It is possible to get those feelings back, you know, with a simple game of self-respect. There's a book called 'Dianetics: the Modern Science of Mental Health,' by L. Ron Hubbard . . ."—Former N.F.L. Quarterback John Brodie, in a video-cassette ad at the Scientology booth.) "Anybody that has juicers—you look at them. They're slim, they're lithe, they're vital. Look at athletes when they're running marathons—they're drinking freshly made fruit and vegetable juices. From birth, every cell in the body divides and divides again—with the exception of your brain. At age seventy, millions of the neurons in the brain are atrophied and decayed. Why? Because you haven't bathed those neurons with natural juices! The first thing you do with juices is bathe that brain! That should be in the bull's-eye center of your diet. I used to play for the Green Bay Packers and for U.S.C. in the Rose Bowl, and I know. I drink, I would say, ninety-eight per cent of my food in natural juices and I eat two per cent in solid food." ("You have just purchased the Rolls Royce of pet foods. We know that discerning pet parents value the quality of their pet's life. Since nutrition is one of the two factors that determines the quality of pet life . . ."—Pamphlet at the Cornucopia Super-Life/Super-Stress Pet Food booth.) "When you juice, all the chemicals and additives are removed! They go out with the fibres, and, rubbish-wise, this fibre has no food value to it. Some of the things people eat, there is no way of getting the chemicals out before you eat them. Chickens, for example, are fed all kinds of chemicals. Think of yourself—when you drink beer, you run, you exercise, and you sweat it out. But did you know—*a chicken has no sweat glands!*" ("TV Personality Mr. Slim Goodbody, the nutritional song-and-dance man, is now appearing in the lecture hall."—Announcement over the P.A. system.) "That's why you desperately need a juicer! Those of you that have muscle cramps, fatigue easily, those of you that can't sleep nights, have anxiety, make a big glass of potassium broth—parsley, spinach, carrots, and celery—every night before you go to bed. Apple and beet juice is good for the liver. For cataracts, a fruit juice with a very high vitamin-C dosage. Melon juice is good for many ills, but you must never mix melon juice with anything else. Papaya juice—wonderful enzymes." ("Butter, milk, and eggs are all mentioned in the Bible, and when man comes along and says these things are wrong, then it's time for a showdown. The principle to



"Oh, for God's sake, Jerry! Pick a card."

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remember is: Don't buy anything that God didn't make!"—Anti-margarine speaker in the lecture hall.) "This '78 model juicer, you can't see it with the naked eye, but inwardly it's been improved. No other juicer makes the juice gush out that quickly. Other juicers have restrictions. Let's see them do wheat sprouts! Let's see them do alfalfa sprouts! Let's see them do grapes, stems and all! Some of these juicers on the market, buying them is like taking your money and tearing it up and throwing it up in the air. You show me a better juicer and I'll go out and sell it. I want to put my vibes into the *best* juicer there is!"

The Rooster

HAIM GABAI, the owner of S.O.S. Locksmith, on Seventh Avenue in Chelsea, firmly denies that the live rooster in the window of his shop is there to attract business. Rather, he explains, deciding to provide a home for the rooster was a selfless, humanitarian gesture. Three months ago, Mr. Gabai rescued the rooster from the Café Borinqueneer, a tavern next door where English is occasionally spoken. A sign above the entrance to the Café Borinqueneer indicates that the place is available for catered weddings and christening parties, but the business card of the proprietor, Miguel A. Del Rosario, places the emphasis upon two attractions described as Go-Go Girls and Shows Latinos. Early last fall, shortly after the rooster, not long out of the shell, arrived on these shores from his native Puerto Rico, he went to work at the Borinqueneer. At the time, his given name was Ye-Ye, and his main duty was to strut along the bar and divert customers during slack periods between Shows Latinos and performances by the Go-Go Girls. When he wasn't doing that, he was confined to a back room, where he made so much noise that Haim Gabai, in his locksmith shop, could hear him. Eventually, Mr. Gabai went next door and persuaded German Roman, a Borinqueneer employee and the erstwhile owner of the bird, that a bar was not a healthy place for a young rooster, and that a young rooster might not be a health asset to the bar. Mr. Roman, who had entertained thoughts of training Ye-Ye for the fight ring, agreed to sell him to Mr. Gabai instead, for fifteen dollars.

"I bought food for him, and he was really hungry," Mr. Gabai told us the other day. "The people next door, I don't think they knew how to feed him correctly. He lives very well here."

Mr. Gabai spends many of his working hours on calls that take him outside the shop. While he is away, the rooster enjoys the company of two S.O.S. employees, Maida Dalama and Al Emmons, and they, for their part, enjoy studying the vagaries of rooster behavior.

"The only time he'll talk is when he's happy," Al told us. "He's happy

FOR RENT
3½ RMS
"LIVE LIKE
A MAYOR"
W Miller

when he's eating. He eats pickles, potato chips, cheese, ham, and eggs. Loves ham."

"He does not like eggs," Maida said, correcting Al. "He doesn't want to eat his own kind."

"He's never been in a fight," said Al.

"No," said Maida. "I think he was bred as a fighter, but I think Haim took him away from all of that."

"He sits in the front window because he likes to see people," said Al.

"Likes women," Maida added. "He definitely likes women. He definitely doesn't like Arty, who works in our new shop, in Queens."

"He loves aggravating Arty," said Al. "He has no special tricks. He just likes to parade around and, if possible, aggravate Arty."

Their observations have led Al and Maida to conclude that the rooster is undergoing a mild identity crisis. Studying his reflection in the window, he can see his gray-and-white mottled body, yellow neck feathers, deep-blue-green tail plume, and tomato-red comb and wattles; thus, he instinctively realizes that he is a rooster. Occasionally, however, he becomes imperious and behaves like a watchdog; he moves around suspiciously when a stranger enters the shop. Also, he isn't quite certain of his name. After making the move from the Café Borinqueneer, he had to unlearn Ye-Ye, because Haim and Maida had decided to rename him Scottie, in honor of a West Indian locksmith who works for Mr. Gabai.

"We call Scottie the locksmith Scottie No. 1," Maida explained. "Scottie the rooster is Scottie No. 2."

"My full name is Omar Scott," said Scottie No. 1 when we met him. "Like Omar Khayyam. I'm also full of romantic poetry that I pour out to fine ladies like her." As he spoke, he smiled at Maida.

Lately, Scottie No. 1 has been trying to get Scottie No. 2 to answer to yet another name—Louie. The fact remains, however, that the rooster reacts more alertly to "Scottie" than to "Louie." He also reacts vigorously to dogs passing in front of the store. Their presence causes him to twitch and cluck. If the traffic on the sidewalk bores him, he wanders to the back of the store and nibbles birdseed and corn from a red feeding trough or has a drink of water from his plastic bowl. When he needs exercise, he flies from a roost behind the counter, above a sign advertising Medeco locks, to the front window, where he settles down amid a display of cylinder guards, chain door locks, key window locks, padlocks, and police locks. Upon landing, he likes to balance on one leg and preen a bit. He is a self-assured bird.

On a clear day, every fourth or fifth passerby notices Scottie. This makes his view of the world approximate an extended episode from "Candid Camera." It is in the late afternoons, when people are on their way home from work, that he draws the most attention. A few regulars drop in frequently to inquire about his welfare.

The other afternoon, a young couple stopped by to have a set of keys copied. The man was the urban-cowboy type, with a dark beard, boots, jeans, and a leather jacket. The woman was tall, with light-brown hair and bright-pink cheeks, and wore jeans, boots, a gray wool coat, and a straw hat.

"Is that a rooster, and is he here all the time?" the young man asked.

"Yes," said Maida. "He likes it here."

The young man nodded sagely, as if to signify that, in a cosmic sense, the arrangement struck him as all right.

Shortly after that, a middle-aged woman with an arm full of packages stopped outside the store, looked in at Scottie, and began to offer a cartoon-version imitation of a rooster. "Buh-*bok*-bok-bok-bok-bok-bok-bok," she said. "Come on, rooster. Buh-*bok*-bok-bok-bok-bok-bok-bok." Scottie stared at her for a while and then bobbed his head several times. On the other side of the glass, the woman's clucking grew more insistent. After a moment of contemplation, Scottie abandoned modesty and erupted into an aria—first a couple of preliminary crows, then a haughty string of five or six more. Outside, standing in the falling snow, the woman now dropped her packages, spread her elbows, and began to crow herself—heartily, full-throated. Hunched over as she was, she blocked the window almost entirely, so that anyone passing by at that instant would have had a hard time seeing that there was a rooster inside the locksmith's shop.

THE APOLOGY

SITTING on the floor by the window with only part of my face in the window. He'll never come back.

—Of course he will. He'll return, open the gate with one hand, look up and see your face in the window.

—He'll never come back. Not now.

—He'll come back. New lines on his meagre visage. Yet with head held high.

—I was unforgivable.

—I would not argue otherwise.

—The black iron gate, difficult to open. Takes two hands. I can see it. It's closed.

—I've had hell with that gate. In winter, without gloves, yanking, late at night, turning my pretty head to see who might be behind me . . .

—That time that guy was after you . . .

—The creep—

—With the chain.

—Naw he wasn't the one with the chain he was the other one. With the cudgel.

—Yes they do seem to be carrying cudgels now, I've noticed that. Big knobby cudgels.

—It's a style, makes a statement, something to do with their sexual . . . I imagine.

—Sitting on the floor by the window with only part of my face in the window, the upper part, face truncated under the eyes by the what do you call it, sill.

—But bathed nevertheless by the heat of the fire, which spreads a pleasing warming tickle across your bare back.

—I was unforgivable.

—I don't disagree.

—He'll never come back.

—Say you're sorry.

—I'm not sorry.

—Genuine sorrow is gold. If you can't do it, fake it.

—I'm not sorry.

—Well screw it. It's six of one and half dozen of the other to me. I don't care.

—What?

—Forgive me. I didn't mean that.

—What?

—I just meant you could throw him a bone is all I meant. A note written on pale blue notepaper, in an unsteady hand. "Dear William, it is one of the greatest regrets of my poor life that . . ."

—Never.

—He may. He might. It's possible. Your position, there in the window, strongly suggests that the affair has yet some energy unexpended. That the magnetic north of your brain may attract his wavering needle still.

—That's kind of you. Kind.

—Your wan, white back. Your green, bifurcated French jeans. Red lines on your back. Cat hair on your jeans.

—Wait. What is it that makes you leap up so, my heart?

—The gate.

—The sound of the gate. The gate opening.

—Is it he?

—It is not. It is a someone.

—Let me look.

—He's standing there.

—I know him. Tony deGroot. Looking up at our windows.

—Who's Tony deGroot?

—Guy I know. Melville Fisher Kirkland Leland & deGroot.

—What's he want?

—My devotion. I've disabused him a hundred times, to little avail. If he rings, don't answer. Of course he's more into standing outside and gazing up.

—He looks all right.

—Yes he is all right. That's Tony.

—Powerful forehead on him.

—Yes it is impressive. Stuffed with banana paste.

—Good arms.

—Yes, quite good.

—Looks like he might fly into a rage if crossed.

—He rages constantly.

—We could go out in the street and hit on him, drive him away with blows and imprecations.

—Probably have little or no effect.

—Stick him with the spines of sea urchins.

—Doubt you could penetrate.

—But he's a friend of yours so you say.

—I got no friends babe, no friends, no friends. When you get down to the nut-cutting.

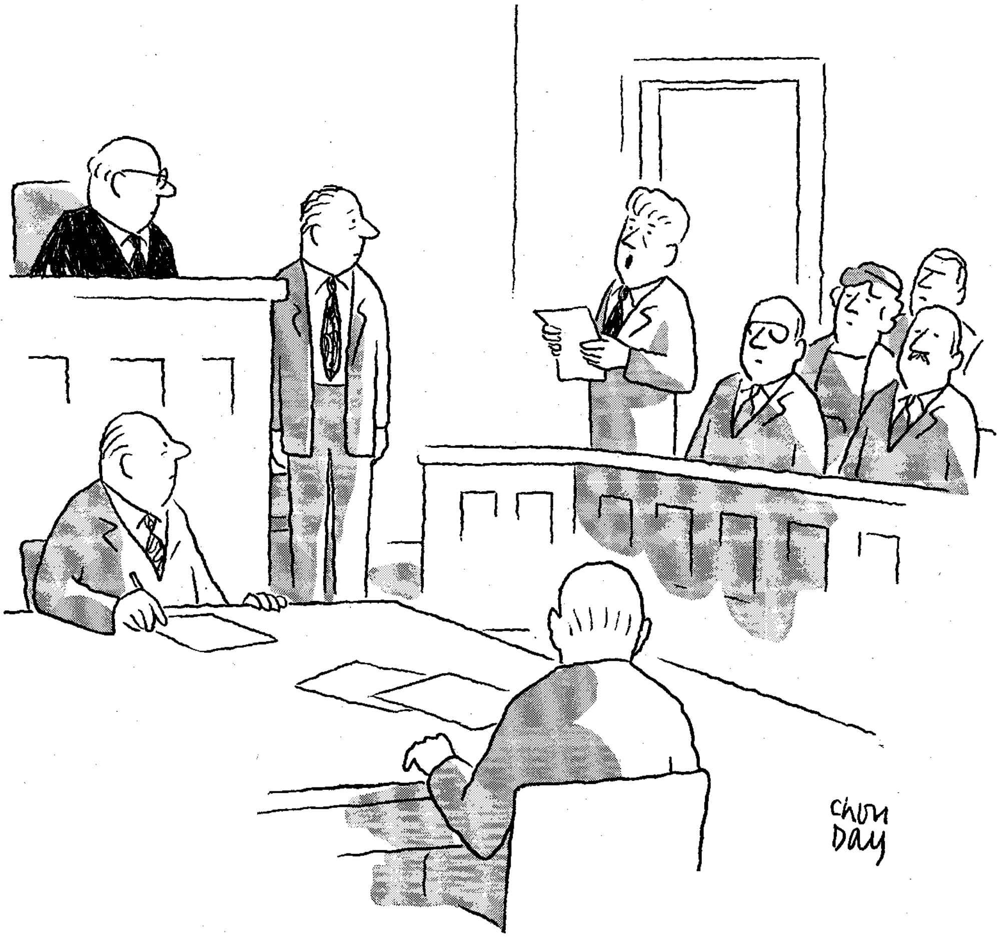
—Go take a poke.

—I don't want to be the first, you do it.

—Ah the hell with it. Sitting here with my head hanging in the window, what a way for a grown woman to spend her time.

—Many ways a grown woman can spend her time. Many ways. Lacemaking. Feeding the golden carp. Fibonacci numbers.

—Perhaps a new gown, in fawn



"We find the defendant guilty as charged by the media."

or taupe. That might be a giggle. Meanwhile, I am planted on this floor. Sitting on the floor by the window with only my great dark eyes visible. My great dark eyes and, in moments of agitation, my great dark nose. Ogled by myriads of citizens bopping down these Chuck's Pizza-plated streets.

—How pale the brow! How pallid the cheek! How chalk the neck! How floury the shoulders! And so on. Say you're sorry.

—I cannot. What's next? Can't sit here all night. I'm nervous. Look on the bright side, maybe he'll go away. He's got a gun stuck in his belt, a belly gun, I saw it. I scraped the oatmeal out of the pot you'll be glad to know. Used the mitt, the black mitt. Throw something at him, a spear or a rock. Open the window first. Spear's in the closet. I can lend you a rock if you don't have a rock. Hurt him. Make him go away. Make the other return. Stir up the fire. Put on some music. Have you no magic? Why do I know you? What are you good for? Why are you here? Fetch me some chocolate? Massage?

—He'll never come back. Until you say it.

—Be damned if I will. Damned a thousand times.

—Then you forfeit the sunshine of his poor blasted face forever. You are dumb, if I may say so, dumb, dumb. It's easy. It's like saying thank you. Myself, I shower thanks everywhere. Thank people for their kindness, thank them for their courtesy. Thank them for their thoughtfulness. Thank them for little things they do if they do little things that are kind, courteous, or thoughtful. Thank them for coming to my house and thank them for leaving. Thank them for what they are about to do as well as thank them for what they have already done, thank them in public and then take them aside privately and thank them again. Thank the thankless and thank the already adequately thanked. In fine, let no occasion pass to slip the chill blade of your thanks between the ribs of every human ear.

—Well. I see what you mean.

—Act.

—Tony has bestirred himself.

—What's he doing?

—Sitting. On a garbage can.

—I knew him, long ago and far away.

—Cincinnati.

—Yes. Engaged then in the manufacture of gear shafts, he was. Had quite a nice wife at that period, name of Caledonia. She split. Then another wife, Cecile as I recall, ran away with a gibbon. Then another wife whose name, tax my memory as I may, cannot be brought to consciousness, think I spilled something on her once, something that stained. She too evaporated. He came here and joined Melville Fisher etc. Fell in love with a secretary. Polly. She had a beaded curtain in front of her office door and burnt incense. Quite exotic, for Melville Fisher. She ended up in the harem of one of those mystics, a maharooni. Met the old boy once, he grasped my nose and pulled, I felt a great surge of something. Like I was having my nose pulled.

—So that's Tony.

—Yes. What's the sucker doing now?

—He's combing his head. Got him a steel comb, maybe aluminum.

—What's to comb? What's he doing now?

—Adjusting his pants. He's zipping.

—You are aware dear colleague are you not that I cannot abide, cannot abide, even the least wrinkle of vulgarity in social discourse? And that this "zipping" as you call it—

—You are censorious, Madame.

—A mere scant shallow preludium, Madame, to the remarks I shall bend in your direction should you persist.

—Shall we call the cops?

—And say what?

—Someone's sitting on our garbage can?

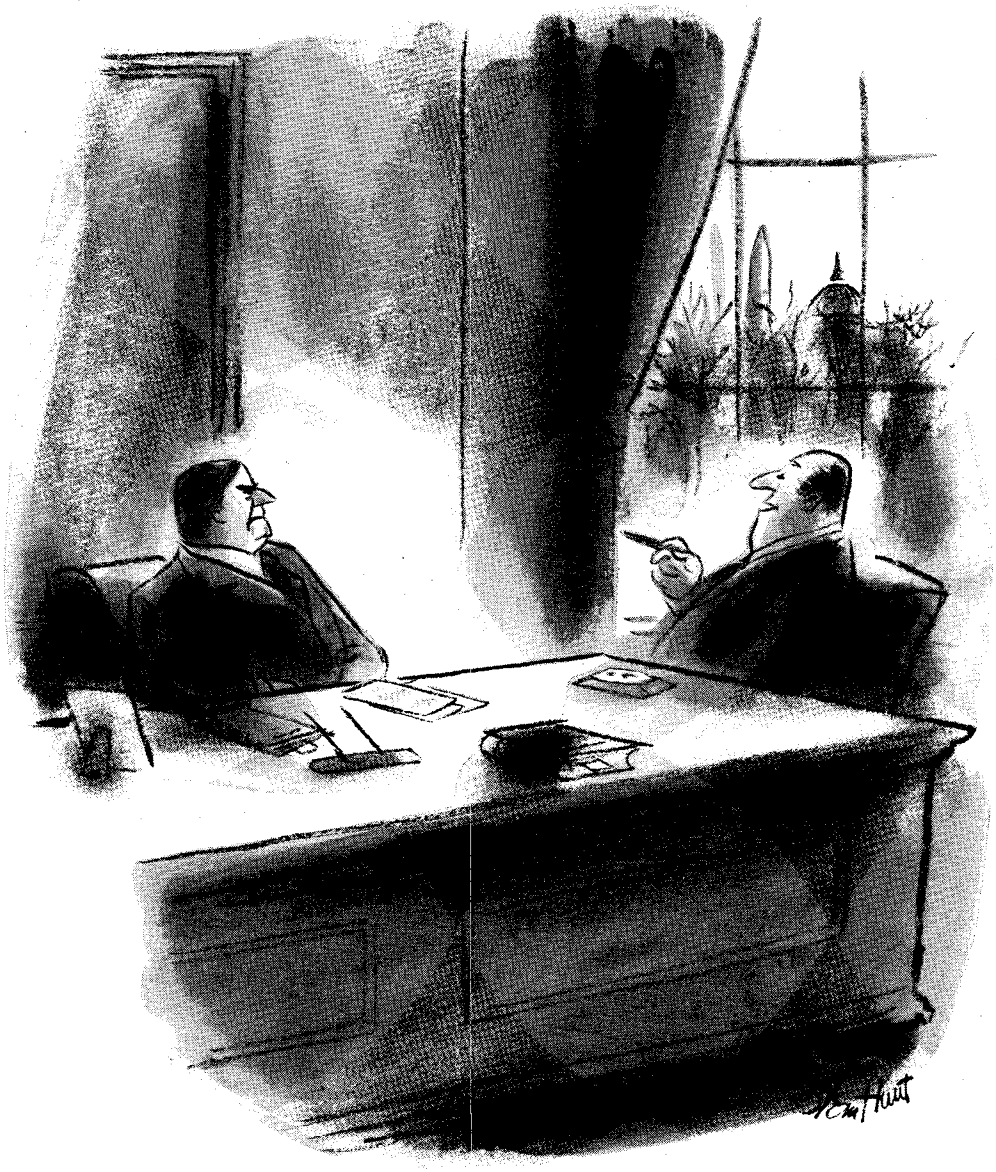
—Maybe that's not illegal?

—Oh my God he's got it out in his hands. Oh my God he's pointing his gun at it.

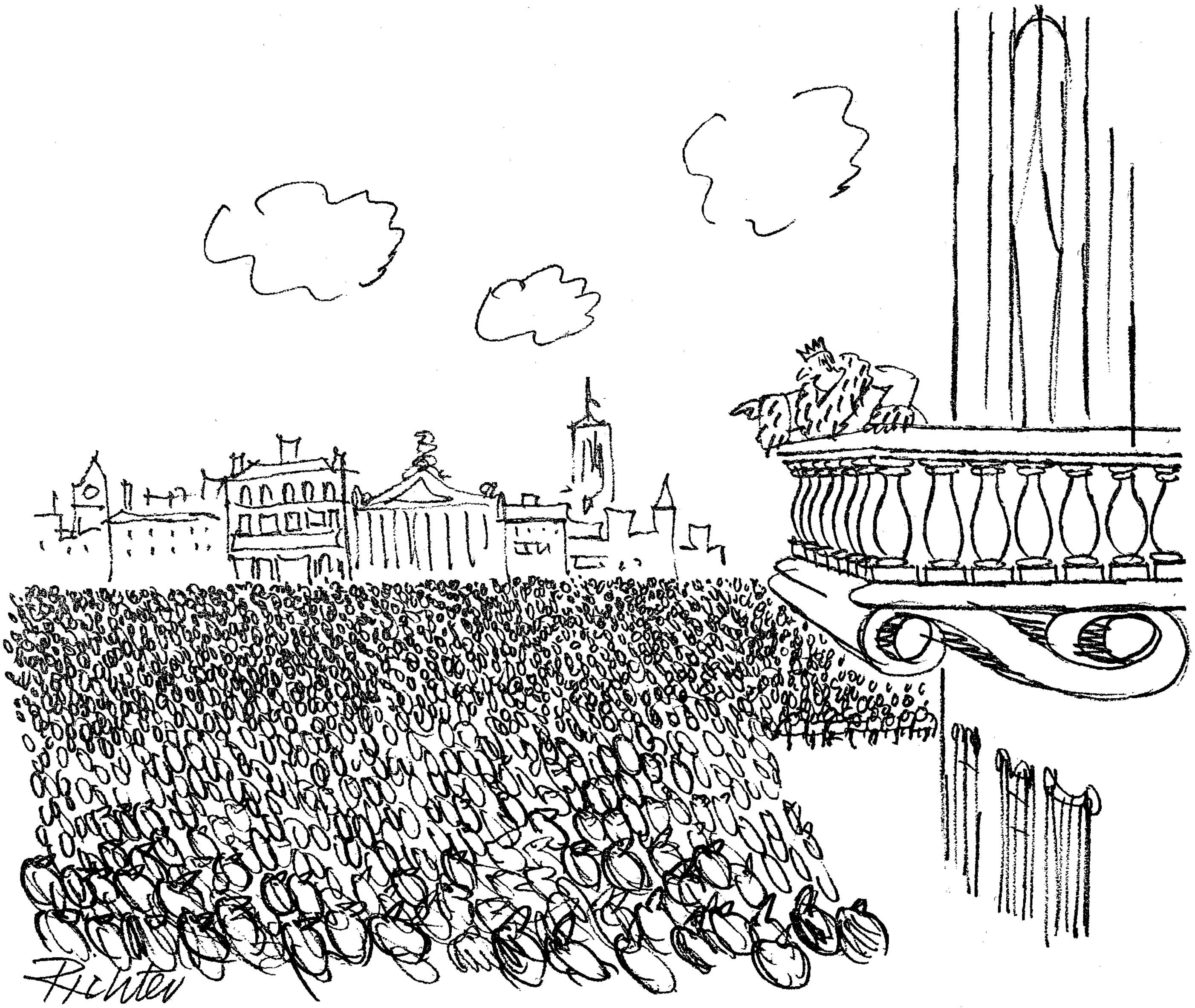
—Oh my God. Shall we call the cops?

—Open the window.

—Open the window?



"Let's not split hairs, Senator. We both know that big government and private enterprise worship at the same church."



"I believe the gentleman over there had his hand up first."

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—Yes open the window.

—O.K. The window's open.

—*William! William, wherever you are!*

—You're going to say you're sorry!

—*William! I'm sorry!*

—Tony's put everything away!

—*William I'm sorry I let my brother hoist you up the mast in that crappy jury-rigged bosun's chair while everybody laughed! William I'm sorry I could build better fires than you could! I'm sorry my stack of Christmas cards was always bigger than yours!*

—Tony quails. That's good.

—*William I'm sorry you don't ski and I'm sorry about your back and I'm sorry I invented bop jogging which you couldn't do! I'm sorry I loved Antigua! I'm sorry my mind wandered when you talked about the Army! I'm sorry I was superior in argument! I'm sorry you slit open my bicycle tires looking for incriminating letters that you didn't find! You'll never find them!*

—Wow babe that's terrific babe. Very terrific.

—*William! I'm sorry I looked at Sam but he was so handsome, so handsome, who could not! I'm sorry I slept with Sam! I'm sorry about the library books! I'm sorry about Pete! I'm sorry I never played the guitar you gave me! William! I'm sorry I married you and I'll never do it again!*

—Wow.

—Was I sorry enough?

—Well Tony's run away howling.

—Was I sorry enough?

—Terrific. Very terrific.

—Yes I feel much better.

—Didn't I tell you?

—You told me.

—Are you O.K.?

—Yes I'm fine. Just a little out of breath.

—Well. What's next? Do a little honky-tonking maybe, hit a few bars?

—We could. If you feel like it. Was I sorry enough?

—No.

—DONALD BARTHELME

•

The "Toccato Decima" of the 17th century Austrian, Georg Muffat, was followed by four pieces from the French de Grigny's 1699 "Livre d'Orgue." J.S. Bach's "Tobacco in F Major," S 540, with its dazzling pedal cadenzas, led up to the evening's special highlight, a work commissioned for the occasion by the builder, Walter Holtkamp of Cleveland, Ohio, and composed by Meredith's Dr. Peter Klausmeyer. Both men were in the audience.—*Raleigh (N.C.) News & Observer.*

Bach was there, too, smoking his head off.

ON THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF

THE sea fog began to lift toward noon. It had been blowing in, thin and loose, for two days, smudging the tops of the trees in the ravine where the house stood. "Like the cold breath of old men," Rowena wrote in an attempt at a poem, but changed the line, out of kindness, to "the breath of ghosts," because Harry might take it personally. The truth was that his breath was not foggy at all but smelled of the dozens of cigarettes he smoked all day. He would walk about, taking little steps, with his hand outstretched, tapping the ash off as he talked. It gave an abstracted, searching elegance, which his heavy face and long sentences needed. On this morning, Rowena went to his room, in her dressing gown. His glasses were off and he had finished shaving, and he turned a face savaged to the point of saintliness by age but with a heavy underlip that made him look helplessly brutal. She laughed at the soap in his ears.

"The ghosts have gone," she said poetically. "We can go to Withy Hole! I'll drive by the Guilleth road—there's a fair there. They'll tell our fortunes."

"Dull place," he said. "It used to be full of witches in the sixteenth century."

"I'm a witch," she said. "I want to go to the fair. I saw the poster. It starts today."

"We'll go," he said, suspicious but giving in.

He was seventyish, and with a young girl of twenty-five one had to pretend to be suspicious, of course. There are rules for old men who are in love with young girls—all the stricter when the young girls are in love with them. It has to be played as a game.

"The sea-pinks will be out on the cliffs," he said.

"You old botanist!" she said.

He was about to say, "I know that," and go on to say that girls were like flowers with voices and that he had spent a lot of his life collecting both, but he had said these things to her often before and at his age one had to avoid repeating oneself, if possible. Anyway, it was more effective as a compliment when other people were there and they would turn to look at her. When young girls turned into women, they lost his interest; he had always lived for reverie.

"So it's settled," she said.

Now he looked tragic as he gazed at her. Waving his razor, he began his nervous trick of taking a few dance-like steps, and she gave him one of her light hugs and ran out of the room.

What with his organizing fusses and her habit of vanishing to do something to a drawing she was working on, the start was late.

"We'll *have to eat something,*" she said, playing at being in command.

But it was his house, not hers. He'd lived alone long enough not to be able to stand a woman in his kitchen—could not bear to see her cut a loaf or muddle the knives and forks or choke the sink with tea leaves. "Rowena and I," he said to people who came to see them, in his military voice, "eat very little. We see no one." This was not true, but, like a general with a literary turn, he organized his imagination. He was much guided by literature. His wife had gone mad and killed herself. So in the house he saw himself as a Mr. Rochester, or in the car as Count Mosca with the young duchess in "La Chartreuse de Parme;" if they met people, as Tolstoy's worldly Cousin Alexandra. This was another game; it educated the girl.

While he fussed between the kitchen and the room they ate in, she came down late and idled, throwing back her long black hair, lassoing him with smiles and side glances. She rushed at him while he had a butter plate in his hand and gave him another of her light engulfing hugs and laughed as he waved the plate in the air.

"Rowena!" he shouted, for she had gone off again. "Get the car out."

The house was halfway up the long ravine, backed and faced by an army of ash trees and beeches. There was the terrace and the ingenious steep garden and the plants that occupied him most of the day. Down from the terrace, he had had to cut the twenty or thirty steps in the path himself, heaving his pickaxe. Rowena had watched his thick stack of coarse gray hair and his really rather brutal face and his pushed-out lips as he hacked and the pick hit the stones. He worked with such anger and pride, but he looked up at her sometimes with appealing, brilliant eyes. His furious ancient's face contained pain naturally.

She knew he hated to be told to be careful when he came down the steps. She knew the ceremony of getting him into the car, for he was a tall, angular man and had to fold himself in, his knees nearly touching his chin. It was exciting for her to drive the old man dangerously fast down the long circling lane through the trees—to show how dangerous she could be—while he talked. He would talk non-stop for the next hour, beginning, of course, with the country fair: "It's no good. All plastic, like cheap food. Not worth seeing. The twentieth century has packaged everything."

And then he was on to the pre-Roman times, the ancient spirit of Carnival, Celtic gods and devils. They drove out of the ravine into deep lanes, where he could name the ferns in the stone walls. Historical instances poured out of him. He was old Father Time himself, she said now, and he humored her with a small laugh. It was part of the game. He was not Father Time, for in one's seventies one is a miser of time, putting it by, hiding the minutes, while she spent it fast, not knowing she was living in time at all.

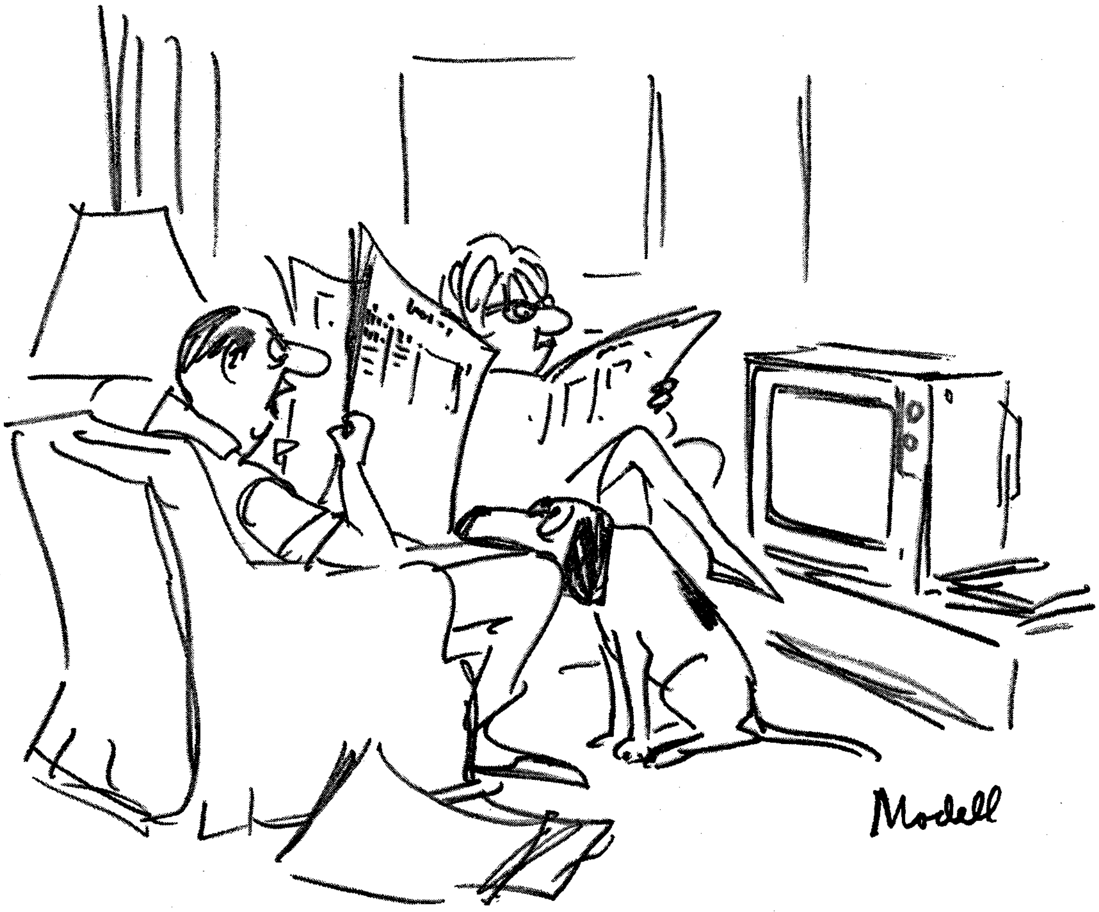
Guilleth was a dull, dusty Methodistical little town, with geraniums in the windows of the houses. Sammy's Fair was in a rough field just outside it, where dogs and children ran about. There was only one shooting gallery; they were still putting up the back canvas of the coconut shy. There were Hoop-la stalls—a lot of shouting and few customers—but the small roundabout gave out its engine whistle, and the children packed the vulgar circle of revolving spotted cows with huge pink udders, the rocking horses, the pigs, the tigers, and a pair of giraffes.

Harry regarded it all as a cultural pathos. He feared Rowena. She was quite childishly cruel to him. With a beautiful arrogance that mocked him she got out of the car and headed for ice cream. He had to head her off the goldfish in their bowls. She'd probably want to bring one home.

"Give me some money," she said, going to the roundabout. There was a small crowd near that. "I'm going on the giraffe. Come on."

"I'll watch you," he said, complaining, and cleaned his glasses.

There she was, riding a giraffe already, tall and like a schoolmistress among the town children, with her long hair, which she kept on throwing



"Don't tell me you have bad news, too."

back as she whirled round—a young miracle, getting younger and younger. There were other girls. There were town youths and there was an idiotic young man with yellow curling hair riding backward on a cow, kicking out his legs every now and then, waving to the crowd. Rowena on her giraffe did not smile, but sedately waved to the old man as she sailed by.

He looked at his watch. How much longer?

"I'm going on again!" she called, and did not get off.

He found himself among the other patient watchers—older than all, better dressed too, on his dignity, all curiosity gone. He moved away, to separate himself from his bunch of them, but he had the impression they all moved with him. There was a young woman in a brilliant-red coat who always seemed to be in the next bunch he joined. Round came the giraffe; round came the young man on the cow. The young woman in red waved. The old man waved, at the giraffe. The woman waved again a moment later and stared at him as if annoyed. He moved a yard from her, then five yards, then to the other side of the roundabout. Here he could wave without being conspicuous, yet the woman was standing close to him once more. She was small, with reddish hair, her chin up. She was looking at him.

"You don't remember me," she said to him in a high, accusing voice. Her small eyes were impudent. He stepped back.

"Daisy Pyke," she said.

Pyke? Pyke? He gaped at her briefly, his mind sailing round with Rowena.

"George's wife," she said, challenging his stupidity.

"George—" But he stopped. George Pyke's wife must be fifty by now. This woman could not be more than thirty. Her daughter—had they had a daughter?

"Have I changed as much as that?" she said. Her manner was urchinlike and she grinned with pleasure at his confusion, and then her mouth drooped at the corners plaintively, begging. Nowadays he thought only of Rowena's wide mouth, which made all other women vague to him. And then the hard little pushing mouth and its high voice broke into his memory. He stepped back with embarrassment and a short stare of horror, which he covered quickly, his feet dancing a few steps.

"Daisy! I thought— I was watching that thing," he said with a foolish smile. "What are you doing here?"

He could not conceal, now that he remembered, a note of indignation, and he peered at her, his eyes coldly brilliant.

"The same as you," she said in that curt, offhand voice. "Waiting. Waiting for them to come off." And she turned away from him, offended, and waved wildly at the roundabout and shouted, "Stephen, you fool!" The young man riding backward on the cow waved back and shouted to her.

What an appalling thing! But there it is: one must expect it when one is old. The map in one's head empties and loses its contours; towns and villages and people sink out of sight. The protective faces of friends vanish, and one is suddenly alone, naked and exposed. The population ranked between oneself and old enemies suddenly dissolves, and the enemy stands before one. Daisy Pyke!

The old man could not get away. He said as politely as he could manage, "I thought you went abroad. How is George?"

"We did. George," she said, "died in Spain." And added briskly, "On a golf course."

"I'm sorry. I didn't know."

She looked back at the roundabout and turned again to say to him, "I know all about *you*. You've got a new house at Colfe. I've still got the old house, though actually it's let."

Forty miles lay between Colfe and Daisy Pyke—but no people in between. Now the roundabout stopped. There was a scramble of children getting on and getting off, and the local watchers moved forward. "I must get Rowena," he said ruthlessly and he hurried off, calling out in his peremptory voice, "Rowena!"

He knew that Daisy Pyke was watching him as he held out a hand to help Rowena off, but Rowena ignored it and jumped off herself.

"Rowena. We must go."

"Why? It was lovely. Did you see that ridiculous young man?"

"No, Rowena. Where?"

"Over there," she said, "with the girl in red—the one you were chatting

SANTARÉM

Of course I may be remembering it all wrong
after, after—how many years?

That golden evening I really wanted to go no farther;
more than anything else I wanted to stay awhile
in that conflux of two great rivers, Tapajós, Amazon,
grandly, silently flowing, flowing east.
Suddenly there'd been houses, people, and lots of mongrel
riverboats skittering back and forth
under a sky of gorgeous, under-lit clouds,
with everything gilded, burnished along one side,
and everything bright, cheerful, casual—or so it looked.
I liked the place; I liked the idea of the place.
Two rivers. Hadn't two rivers sprung
from the Garden of Eden? No, that was four
and they'd diverged. Here only two
and coming together. Even if one were tempted
to literary interpretations
such as: life/death, right/wrong, male/female
—such notions would have resolved, dissolved, straight off
in that watery, dazzling dialectic.

In front of the church, the Cathedral, rather,
there was a modest promenade and a belvedere
about to fall into the river,
stubby palms, flamboyants like pans of embers,
buildings one story high, stucco, blue or yellow,
and one house faced with *azulejos*, buttercup yellow.
The street was deep in dark-gold river sand
damp from the ritual afternoon rain,
and teams of zebus plodded, gentle, proud,
and *blue*, with down-curved horns and hanging ears,
pulling carts with solid wheels.
The zebus' hooves, the people's feet
waded in golden sand,
dampered by golden sand,
so that almost the only sounds
were creaks and *shush*, *shush*, *shush*.

Two rivers full of crazy shipping—people
all apparently changing their minds, embarking,
disembarking, rowing clumsy dories.
(After the Civil War some Southern families
came here; here they could still own slaves.
They left occasional blue eyes, English names,
and *oars*. No other place, no one
on all the Amazon's four thousand miles
does anything but paddle.)
A dozen or so young nuns, white-habited,
waved gaily from an old stern-wheeler
getting up steam, already hung with hammocks
—off to their mission, days and days away
up God knows what lost tributary.
Side-wheelers, countless wobbling dugouts . . .
A cow stood up in one, quite calm,
chewing her cud while being ferried,
tipping, wobbling, somewhere, to be married.
A river schooner with raked masts
and violet-colored sails tacked in so close
her bowsprit seemed to touch the church

(Cathedral, rather!). A week or so before
there'd been a thunderstorm and the Cathedral'd
been struck by lightning. One tower had
a widening zigzag crack all the way down.
It was a miracle. The priest's house right next door
had been struck, too, and his brass bed
(the only one in town) galvanized black.
Graças a deus—he'd been in Belém.

In the blue pharmacy the pharmacist
had hung an empty wasps' nest from a shelf:
small, exquisite, clean matte white,
and hard as stucco. I admired it
so much he gave it to me.
Then—my ship's whistle blew. I couldn't stay.
Back on board, a fellow-passenger, Mr. Swan,
Dutch, the retiring head of Philips Electric,
really a very nice old man,
who wanted to see the Amazon before he died,
asked, "What's that ugly thing?"

—Elizabeth Bishop

• •

up, you old rip. I saw you!" She laughed and took his arm. "You're blushing."

"She's not a girl," he said. "She's a woman I used to know in London, twenty years ago. It was rather awful. I didn't recognize her. I used to know her husband. She used to be a friend of Violet's."

"Violet's!" said Rowena. "But you must introduce me." She was always eager to know, as if to possess, everyone he had ever known, to have all of him, even the dead. Above all, Violet, his wife. Rowena longed to be as old as that dear woman.

"Really, Harry, you are frightful with people."

"Oh, well . . . But she's appalling. We had a terrible row."

"One of your old loves," she teased.

"I had to throw her out of the house," he said.

"Then I *must* see her," said Rowena. "How thrilling."

"I think they've gone," he said.

"No," said Rowena, "there they are. Take me over."

And she pulled him toward a Hoop-la stall, where Daisy Pyke and the young man were standing. There lay the delightfulness of Rowena. She freed him from the boredom into which his memories had set and hardened. He had known many young girls who, in this situation, would be eagerly storing opportunities for jealousy of his past life. Rowena was not like that.

At the stall, with its cunningly arranged bowls, jugs, and toys, the young man with the yellow curling hair was pitching rings onto the table, telling Daisy to try, and altering the angle of the ring in her hand.

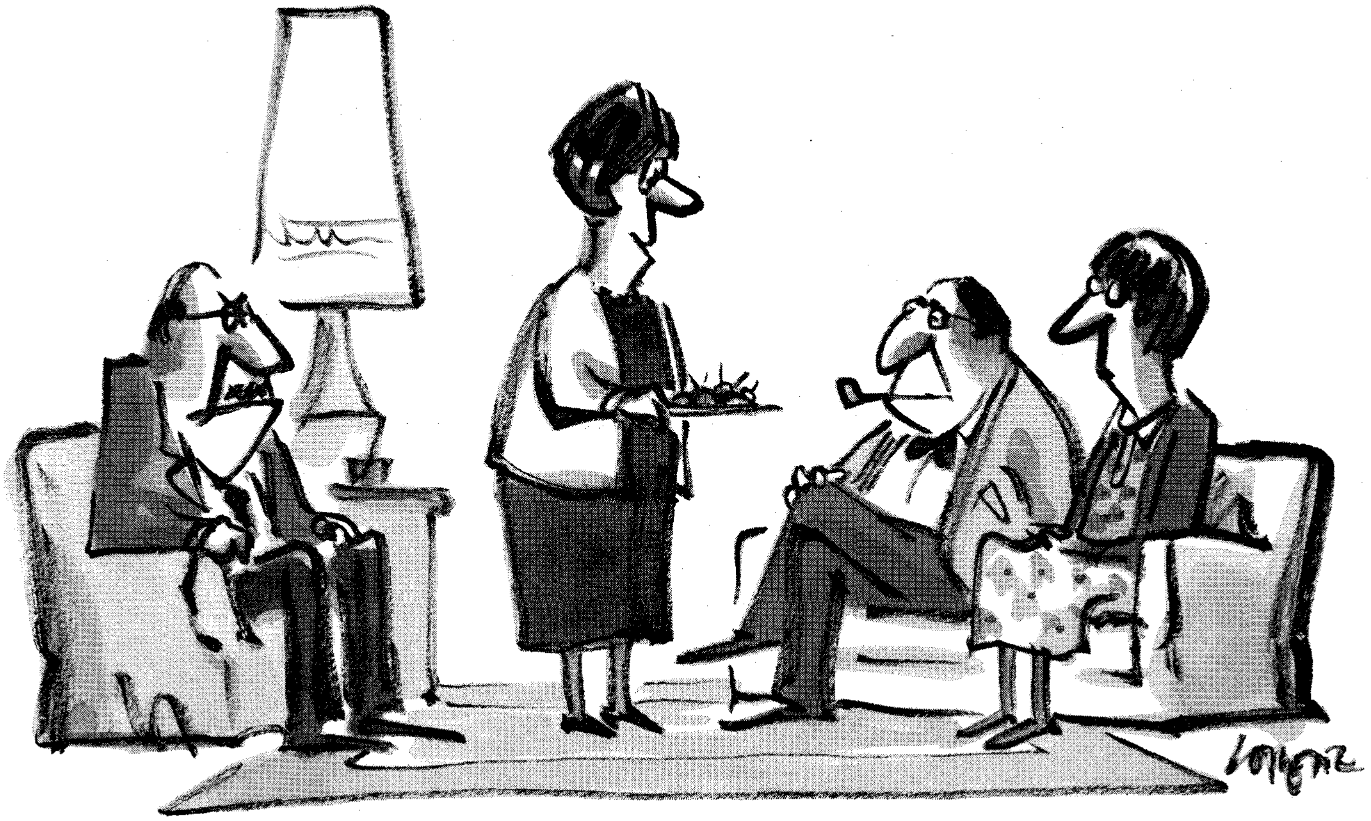
"Hold the ring level and lightly," he said. "Don't bowl it like that! Like this."

Daisy's boldness had gone. She was fond and serious, glancing at the young man before she threw.

"Daisy," said the old man, putting on a shady and formal manner as if he were at a party, "I have brought Rowena to meet you."

And Rowena stepped forward. "How d'you do," she said. "I was telling Harry about the young man on the cow."

"Here he is," said Daisy stiffly. "Stephen."



"Henry has decided to speak out, but he still hasn't found the proper forum."

• •

The young man turned and said, "Hullo," and went on throwing rings. "Like that," he said.

"We are just off," said Harry.

"I've heard a lot about you," said Daisy to Rowena.

"We're going to walk along the cliffs," said Harry.

"To Withy Hole," said Rowena.

"It was extraordinary meeting you here," said Harry.

"Perhaps we'll meet again," said Daisy.

"Oh, well—you know, we hardly see anyone now," said Harry.

"I won a goldfish once," said Rowena, laughing at the boy, who had failed again. "It died on the way home."

"Extraordinary," the old man said as he and Rowena walked away. "That must be George's son, but taller. George was short."

When she got him back into the car she saw by his leaden look that the subject was closed. She had met another of his friends—that was the main thing.

THE hills seemed to pile up and the sea to get farther and farther away, and then suddenly—as they got over the last long hill, passing the caravan sites that were empty at this time of the year and looked like those flat white Andalusian towns from a distance, and the old man was saying, "But we have a new rootless civilization, anarchic but standardized"—the sea appeared between the dunes below, not gray and choppy but deep blue, all candor, like a young mouth, wide and still and sleepily serene. All at once, the old man was in command, fussing about the exact place where they could leave the car, and then struggling through the dunes and then dropping down to the wide beach dotted with last summer's litter, and then, at the end of the sand, climbing up the first of the huge high cliffs. At the top, they could look back at the shallow sea breaking idly on the wide bay in changing lines of surf, like lips speaking sentences that could not be heard. A long way off, a dozen surfers were wading out toward the bigger waves, as if they were leaving the land for good and might be trying to reach the horizon. Rowena stopped to gaze at them, waiting for one of them to come in on a long glissade, but the old man urged her on to the close turf of the cliffs. That was what he had come for: height, boundlessness, distance. One could walk for thirty miles, on a clear day in May like this, without meeting a soul, gazing from headland to headland through the hum of the wind and under the cries of the dashing gulls at what seemed to be an unending procession of fading promontories, each dropping to its own sandy cove, yet still riding out into the water.

The wind did not move the old man's tough thatch of hair, but his big ears seemed to stick out. Rowena had bound her loose hair with a scarf. From low cliff to high cliff, over the cropped turf which was like a carpet, where the millions of sea-pinks and daisies were scattered, mile after mile in their processions, the old man led the way, digging his knees into the air as he walked, gesticulating, talking, pointing to a kestrel above or a cormorant, black as soot, on a rock, while she followed lazily, yards behind him. He stopped and waited impatiently to show her some small cushioned plant, or stood on the cliff's edge, like a prophet, pointing down to the falls of rock below, and to the canyons, caverns, and tunnels into which the water poured black and was sucked out into green again, spilling in waterfalls down the outer rocks. The old man was a strong walker, bending to it, but when he stopped he straightened, and Rowena smiled at his air of detachment as he gazed at distant things, as if he knew them. He looked like a frightening mixture of pagan saint and toiling animal. They would rest at the crest of a black cliff for a few minutes, feeling the sun burn their skins, and then on they went.

"We can't see the bay anymore," she said at last. She was thinking of the surf riders.

"The cliff after the next is Withy

Hole," he said, and pulled her to her feet.

"Yes, the Hole," she said.

He had a kind of mania about the Hole. This was the walk he liked best, and so did she, except for that ugly final horror. The sea had tunnelled under the rock in several places along this wild coast and had eaten out enormous slaty inland craters a hundred yards across. This one was said to be a hundred and eighty feet deep, so that even looking down from the top of the hole one could not see the end of the tunnel below, where the sea came pouring. One stood listening for the boom of the invisible water on a quiet day; on wild ones, it seethed in the bottom of the pot. The place terrified Rowena, and she always held back, but he stumbled through the rough grasses to the edge, calling back bits of geology and navigation and, to amuse her, explaining how smugglers had learned to wait for the low wave to take them in.

Now, once more, they stood looking at the great meaningless wound. It reminded her of his mouth when she had once seen it, with a horror she tried to wipe from her mind, before he had put his dentures in. Of her father's empty mouth, too.

Well, the objective of their walk was achieved. They found a bank out of the wind on the seaward side, where the sun burned, and they rested.

"Heaven," she said and closed her eyes.

They sat in silence for a long time, and he gazed at the rising floor of eventless water. Far out, from time to time, in some small eddy of the wind, little colonies of whitecaps would appear. They were like faces popping up, or perhaps white hands shooting out and disappearing pointlessly. Yes, they were the pointless dead.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked without opening her eyes.

He was going to say, "At my age one is always thinking about death," but he said, "You."

"What about me?" she said with that shamelessness of girls.

"Your ears," he said.

"You are a liar," she said. "You're thinking about Daisy Pyke."

"Not now," he said.

"But you must be," she said. She pointed. "Isn't the cove just below here the one where you all used to bathe with nothing on? Did she come?"

"Round the corner," he said, correcting her. "Violet and I used to bathe there. Everyone came. Daisy came once, when George was on the golf course. She swam up and down, hour after hour, as cold as a fish. She was made to live in water; she was a bore on dry land. Gordon and Vera came, but Daisy only once. She didn't fit in. I remember she sat telling dirty stories. Then she went swimming—it cleaned her mind. George was playing golf all day and bridge all the evening, she said. That didn't go down well. They had a dart board in their house. The target was a naked woman. A pretty awful, jokey couple. You can guess its bull's-eye."

"I want to swim in the cove," said Rowena.

"It's too cold this time of the year," he said.

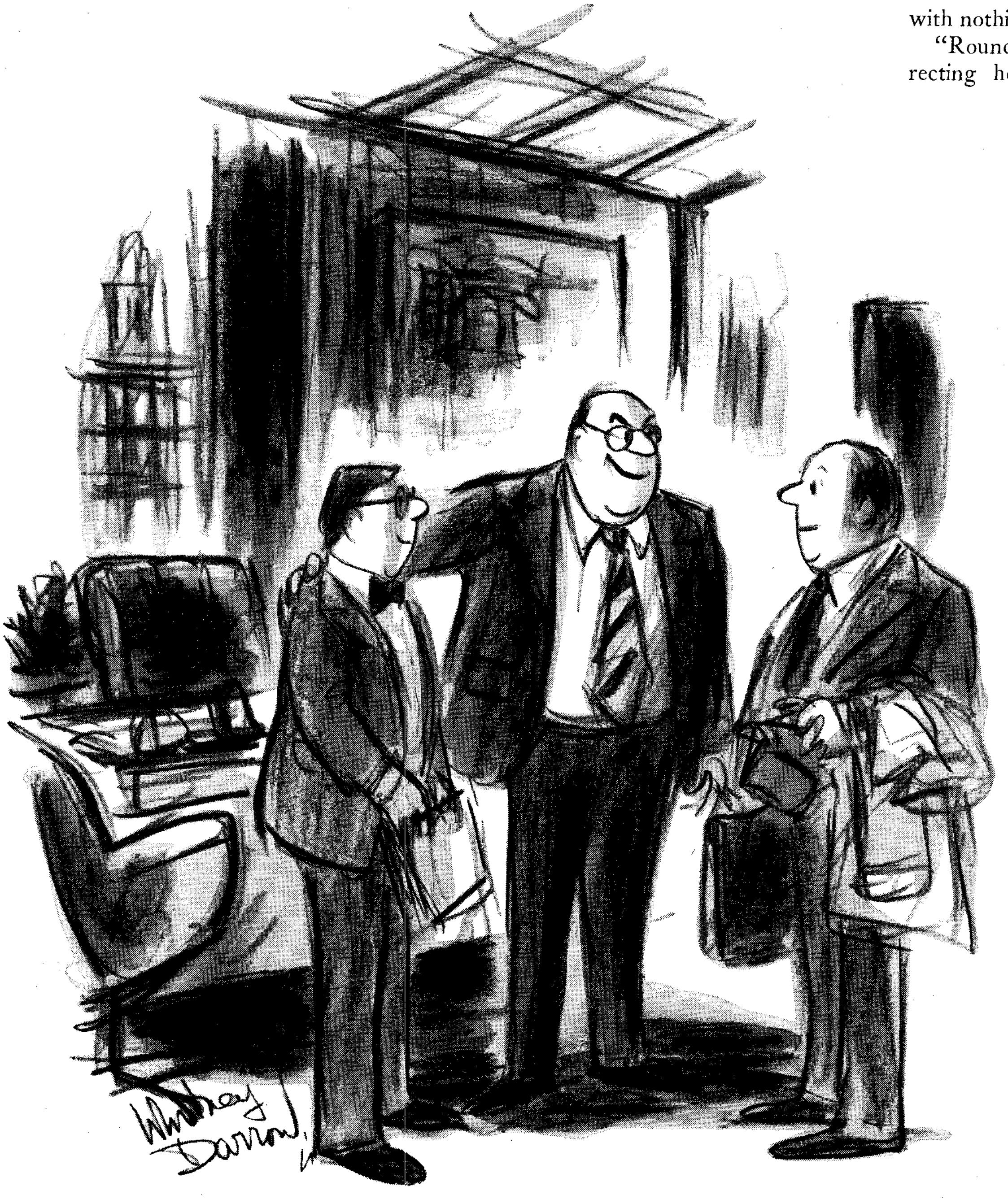
"I want to go."

"It's a long way down and hard coming back."

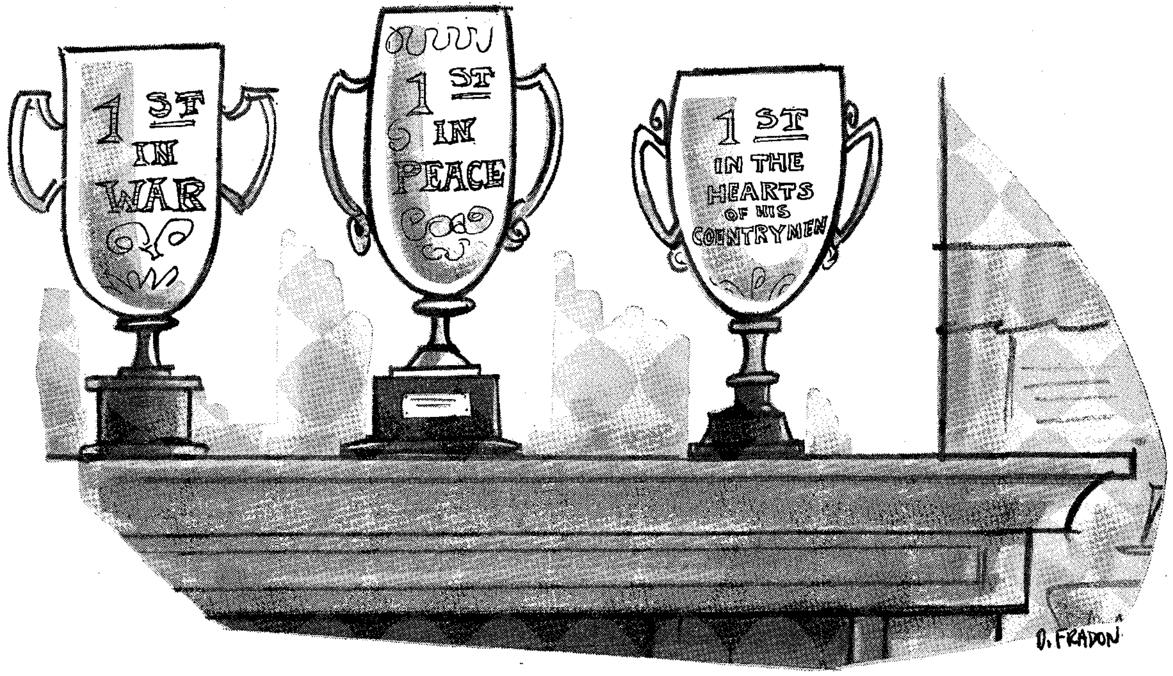
"Yes, but I want to go—where you all used to go."

She was obstinate about it, and of course he liked that.

"All right," he said, getting up. Like all girls, she wanted to leave her mark on places. When he had taken her to Italy, he noticed how she was impelled to touch pictures in gal-


Whitney Darrow, Jr.

"And this is Winston, my pilot fish."


1ST IN WAR
1ST IN PEACE
1ST IN THE HEARTS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN
D. FRADON

leries. Ownership. Power. He used to dislike that but now he did not; the change was a symptom of his adoration of her. Now she wanted to assert her presence on that empty sand, to make the sand feel her mark.

They scrambled a long way down a track, down and down through the rocks until the torn cliffs were gigantic above them in the cove. On the smooth sand, she ran barefoot to the edge of the sea. "It's ice!" she screamed.

He stood there, hunched. There was a litter of last year's rags and cartons near the rocks. Summer crowds nowadays swarmed into the place that had been secret. He glowered with anger at the debris.

She watched the sea. He had turned away.

"Is the tide coming in or going out?" she shouted.

But he was not there. He was out on the rocks; he had pulled off his clothes. He was standing there, his body furred with gray hair, his belly wrinkled, his thighs shrunk. Up went his bony arms.

"You're not to! It will kill you! Your heart!" she shouted.

He gave a wicked laugh, she saw his yellow teeth, and in he dived. He was shouting in the water as he swam out farther, defying her, threshing the water, and then as she screamed at him, really frightened, he turned and swam back at last. He came crawling out like some ugly hairy sea animal, his skin reddened with cold, and stood dripping, with his arms wide, as if he were going to give a howl. He climbed over the rocks and back to the sand to his clothes, and began drying himself with his shirt.

"You're mad," she said. "You're not to put that wet thing on."

"It will dry in this sun," he said.

"What was all that for?" she said. "Did you find her?"

"Who?" he said, looking round in bewilderment. He had dived in boastfully and in a kind of rage—a rage against time, a rage against Daisy Pyke too. He did not answer but looked at her with a glint of shrewdness in his eyes. She was flattered by this look from a sometimes terrifying old man.

He was tired now, and they climbed the cliffs slowly and took the shorter inland road to the car, close to those awful caravan sites. When she got him into the car again he fell asleep and snorted. He went to his room early that evening but could not sleep; he had broken one of his rules for old men. For the first time, he had let her see him naked. He was astounded when the door opened and she came into his room and got into his bed. She had not done this before. "I've come to see the Ancient Mariner," she said.

HOW marvellous. She loves me. He went about saying these things to himself in the next weeks. She had driven to what they called "our town" to buy cakes. ("I am so thin," she said.) She returned saying she had seen his dear friend Daisy. They had both been in the supermarket.

"What's she doing there?" he said. "She lives forty miles away. What did she say?"

"We did not speak. I mean, I don't think she saw me. Her son was with her. He said hullo. He'd got the bonnet of the car up. She came out and gave me a nod—I don't think she likes me," she said with satisfaction.

The next time she went, it was to get petrol. The old man stayed at the house. He shook one or two mats and swept the sitting-room floor. It was his house, and Rowena was untidy. Then he sat on the terrace, listening for her car anxiously.

Presently he picked up the sound—much earlier than her usual time—and saw the distant glint in the trees on the far side of the ravine as the car wound its way up. There she was, threading her beauty through the trees. He heard with alarm the sudden silences of the car at some turn in the hill, then heard it louder as it turned a corner, then passing into silence again. He put his book down and went inside to put the kettle on, and while he waited for it to boil he took the cups out pedantically, one by one, to the table on the terrace and stood listening again. Now it was on the last stretch, now he heard a crackling of wheels below. He ran in to heat the teapot and ran out with his usual phrase: "Did you get what you wanted?"

Then, puffing up the last steps, she came. It was not she but a small woman, bare-legged and in sandals, with a swaggering urchin grin on her face, pulling a scarf off her head. Daisy.

"Gosh!" she said.

He skipped back a yard and stood, straightening himself and frowning. "Daisy!" he said, as if waving her off.

"Those steps! Harry!" she said. "Gosh, what a view."

She gave a dry, dismissive laugh at it. He remembered that she had always defied what she saw. The day when he had seen her at the fair seemed to slide away under his feet, and years slid by after that, following that day.

"What—" he began. Then, in his military way, he jerked out, "Rowena's gone in to the town. I am waiting for her."

"I know," said Daisy. "Can I sit down and get my breath? I know. I saw her." And added with a plotting satisfaction, "Not to speak to. She passed me. Ah, that's better."

"We never see people," said Harry sternly. "You see, I am working. If the telephone rings we don't answer it."

Daisy said, "The same with us. I hope I'm not interrupting. I thought, I'll dash up, just for a minute."

"And Rowena has her work," he said. Daisy was always an interrupter.

"I gave you a surprise," said Daisy comfortably. "She is lovely. That's why I came. You're lucky. How d'you do it? Where did you find her? And what a place you've got here! I made Stephen go and see his friends. It's been such a long time—years, isn't it? I had to come. You haven't changed, you know."

Her eyes and her nose were small. She is at her old game of shock tactics, he thought. He looked blankly at her.

"I must go and turn the kettle off," he said nervously. He paused to listen for Rowena's car, but there was no sound.

When he came back to the terrace with a teapot and another cup, she said, "I knew you wouldn't come and see me, so I came to see you," she said. She took off the scarf from her head. "Let me see. I told you George died, didn't I?"

"Yes."

"But you're happy and I am happy, Harry," she said. "I didn't come to make a scene and drag it all up. I was in love with you, that was the trouble, but I'm not now. I was wrong about you—about you and Violet."

What had she come up here for? To cause trouble between himself and Rowena, as she had tried to do with his wife and himself? He changed the subject.

"What is—" He frowned. "I'm sorry, I can't remember names nowadays. What is your son doing?"

She was quick to notice the change, he saw.

"Oh, Tommy, the ridiculous Tommy. He's in Africa," she said. "Well, it was better for him. Problems. I'm a problem to him. George was so jealous, too."

"He looks exactly like George," Harry said. "Taller, of course—the curly hair."

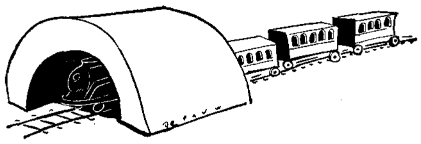
"What are you talking about? You haven't seen him since he was four." She laughed.

"Don't be stupid, Daisy. We saw him at that—what is the name of the place—at the fair."

The blood went from Daisy's face. She raised her chin. "That's a nasty one," she said, and gave her head a fierce shake. "You meant it, too, didn't you? That was Stephen. I thought you'd be the last to think a thing like that, with your Rowena. I expect people say it, and I don't care, and if anyone said it to him he wouldn't know what they were talking about. Stephen's my lover."

The old sentimental, wheedling Daisy was in the coy smile that quickly followed her sharpness.

"He's mad about me," she said. "I may be old enough to be his mother, but he's sick of squealing sulky girls of seventeen. If he had met me years ago he would have hated me. Seriously, Harry, I'd go down on my knees to him."



"I am sorry—I— That's why I didn't recognize you," Harry said. "You can ask Rowena, I said to her that's Daisy Pyke's daughter, when I saw you."

Daisy gaped at him and then slowly her lips curled up with delight.

"Oh good! Is that true? It is? You always told the truth. You really thought that! Thank you, Harry. That's the nicest thing you ever said to me. I love you for it."

She leaned forward, appealing to him

SMALL WILD CRABS DELIGHTING ON BLACK SAND

Nearsighted, I feel a kinship
With these clear shadows.
They scatter, gather, scatter
All around my bare feet.

Two, who feel like two,
Sketch quick faces on my insteps.
Who are they? I don't want to know.
I want to see.

Why do these creatures come out to be
Family to me?
I am not in the water yet.
I wait a little.

Do they want to know me?
I have no more faces to give them
Than the moon has,
Scattering the eight fastidious feet of its light

Around the mountain behind my shoulder,
And now these small shoulders
And faces that seem
Not afraid of me.

Maybe they like to feel
Some warm voice
Singing out of my skin.
Why else would they touch me?

I don't know my language either.
But I hope
They can hear me, singing.
They owe me nothing.

But I believe them, I believe them:
These nearsighted gatherers of one another's flowers.
They touch my flinching instep, but now they float all the way across
The mauve mountain of the evening to rest on the little hill,
Your ankle. And now they are gone. And they do not laugh.

But you do,
My delight, whom I can see
In the dark.

—James Wright

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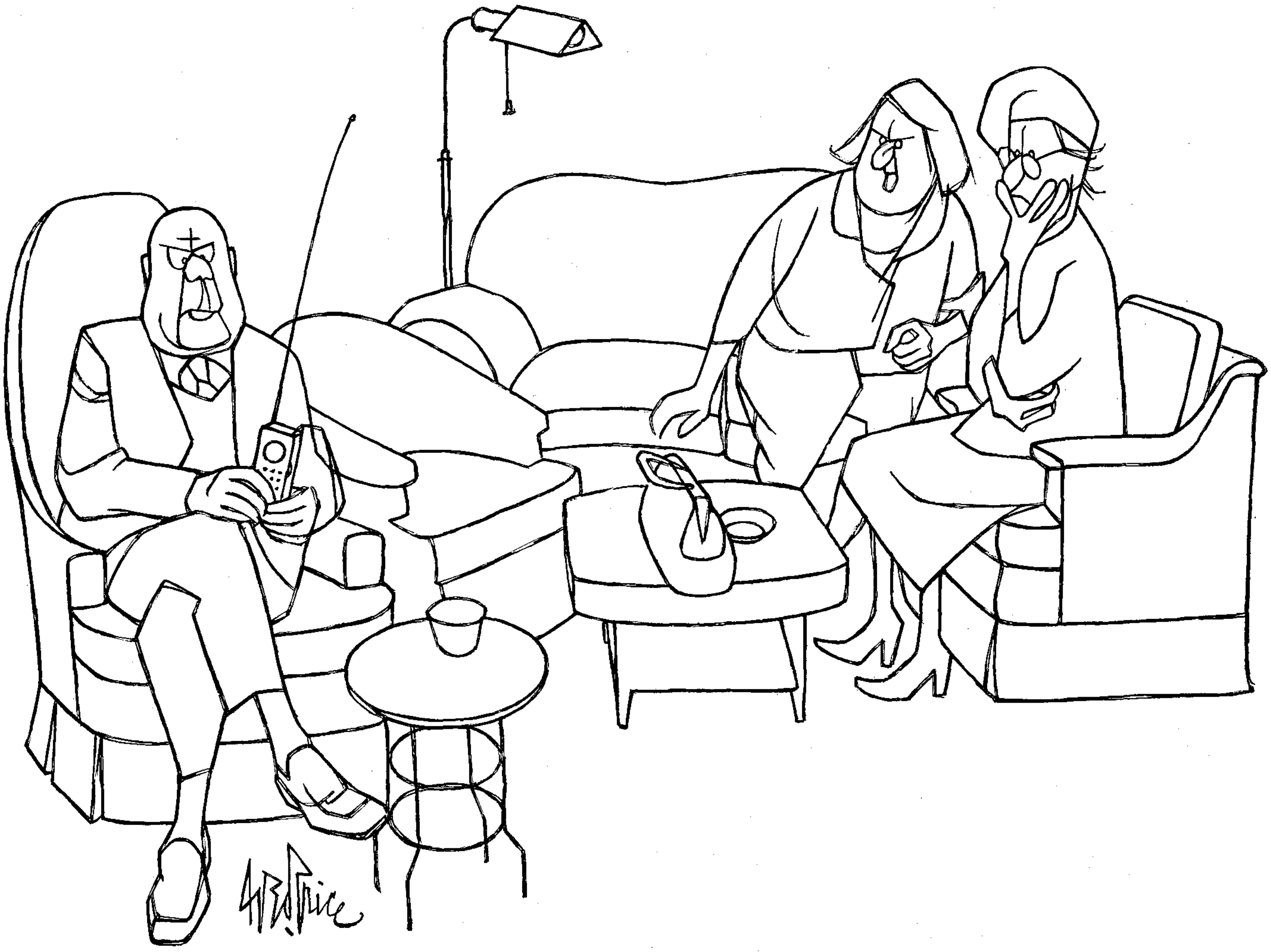


"Hasn't looked me in the eye in twenty-six years."

• •

quietly. "George never slept with me for seven years before he died. Don't ask me about it, but that's the truth. I'd forgotten what it was. When Stephen asked me I thought it was an insult. I got into the car and slammed the door in his face and left him on the road—well, not on the road, but wherever it was—and drove off. I looked back. He was still standing there. Well, I mean, at my age! I was in such a mood. When I got back to the house I shouted for George, howled for him to come back. I poured myself a tumblerful of whiskey and wandered about the house slopping it on the carpet." She laughed. "George would have killed me for *that*, if he had come. I went out into the garden, and there was Stephen, you won't believe it, walking bold as brass up from the gate. He came up quickly and just took the glass from me very politely—the stuff was pouring down my dress—and put it on the grass and he wiped my blouse. That's what did it."

She paused thoughtfully and frowned.

"Not there," she said prudishly. "Not at the house, of course. I wanted to get away from it. I can't bear it. We went to the caravan camp. That's where he was living. I don't know why I'm telling you this."

She paused. "Love is something at our age, isn't it?" she said. "I thought I must go and talk to you. Being in the same boat."

"We're not," he said. "I am twenty years older than you."

"Thirty, if you don't mind," she said, opening her bag and looking into her mirror. When she had put it away with a snap she looked over the flowers in the steep garden going up to the woods. She was listening for the sound of a car. He realized he had stopped listening for it. He found himself enjoying this hour, despite his suspicions of her. It drove away the terrors that seemed to dissolve even the trees of the ravine. With women, nature returned to its place, the trees became real trees. With them, one lived in a long moment in which time had stopped. He did not like Daisy, but she had that power of enticement which lay in the illusion that she was defying you to put her right.

"Where did you and Rowena go, the day we saw you?" she asked suddenly. "You didn't go to the cove, did you? It's a long way. And you can't swim at this time of the year."

"We went to the cove and I *did* swim," he said. "I wouldn't let Rowena."

"You don't forget old times, do you?" She laughed coolly. "I hope you didn't tell Rowena—young girls can be so jealous. I was—d'you remember? Gosh, I'm glad I'm not young still, aren't you?"

"Stop being so sentimental, Daisy," said the old man.

"Oh, I'm not romantic anymore," she said. "It doesn't pay, else one would pity *them*—Rowena and Stephen. So you did go to the cove. Did you think of me?"

"I only think of death now," he said.

"I never think about it. Stephen," she said, "would have a fit. He doesn't even know what he's going to *do*. Last week he thought he'd be a beach guard. He was surfing on the beach when I first saw him. He was living at the camp."

She paused, offended now with herself for giving so much away.

"Did you know they switch off the electric light at ten o'clock at the office in those places?" she went on, changing to protest. "No one says anything. Like sheep. Actually, we're staying in his mother's house now—the bunks are too narrow in those caravans—but she's come back. So we're looking for something. I've let my house. The money is useful."

The old man was alarmed. He was still trying to make out the reason for her visit. And he started listening urgently again for Rowena's car. I know what it is, he thought. She wants to move in here!

"I'm afraid it would be impossible to have you here," he said.

"Here, Harry?" she said, astonished. "None of that! That's not what I came for. Anyway," she went on archly, "I wouldn't trust you."

But she considered the windows and the doors of the house and then the view. She gave a businesslike sniff and said seriously, "You can't keep her a prisoner here. It won't last."

"Rowena is not a prisoner. She can come and go when she likes. We understand that."

"It depends what you mean by coming and going," said Daisy shrewdly. "You mean, *you* are the prisoner. That is it. So am I."

"Oh," said Harry. "Love is always like that. I live only for her."

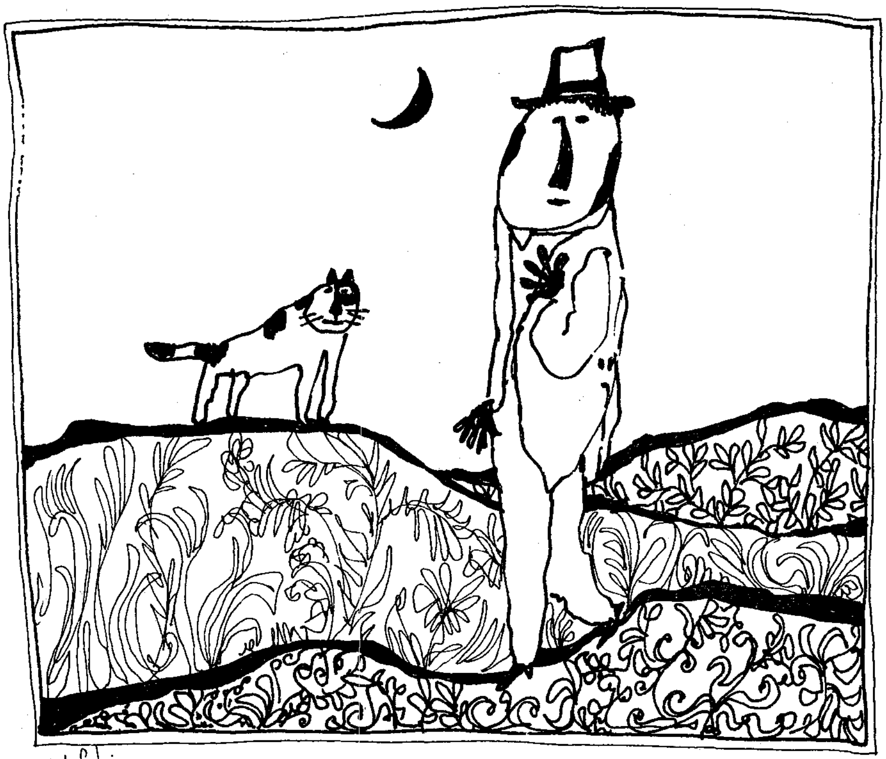
"That is it! I will tell you why I came to see you, Harry. When I saw Rowena in the town I kept out of her way. You won't believe it—I can be tactful."

She looked at him, very serious. "Because I don't want us to meet again," she said. It was an open declaration. "I mean not see you for a long time. I mean, all of us. You see, Rowena is so beautiful, and Stephen—well, you've seen him. You and I would start talking about old times and people, and they'd be left out and drawn together, now, wouldn't they? I just couldn't bear to see him talking to her, looking at her. I wish we had not met, down at the fair. It's all right now, he's with his surfing friends, but you understand?"

She got up and said, "I mean it, Harry. I know what would happen, and so do you, and I don't want to *see* it happen."

She went up to him, because he had stood up, and she tapped him hard on the chest with her firm, bold finger. He could feel it on his skin, a determined blow, after she had stepped away.

"And I don't want *you* to see it happen," she said in her old hard, taunting style. "We never use your town, anyway. I'll see he doesn't. Give me your word. We've got to do this for each other. And it's not saying we'll never meet again someday, is it?"



New Moon

"You're a bitch, Daisy," he said, and he smiled.

"Yes, I'm a bitch still, Harry," she said. "But I'm not a fool."

She put out her hand again and he feared she was going to dig that hard finger into his chest again, but she didn't. She tied her scarf round her hair.

"If anything happened I'd throw myself down Withy Hole," she said.

"Stop being so melodramatic, Daisy," he said.

"Well, I don't want you conniving," she said coarsely.

She turned to the ravine and listened. "Car coming up," she said.

"Rowena," he said.

"I'll be off. Remember."

"Be careful at the turns," he said helplessly. "She drives fast. You'll pass her on the road."

They did not kiss or even shake hands. He listened to her cursing the steps as she went down and calling back, "I bet you dug out these bloody steps yourself!"

He listened to the two cars whining their way toward each other as they circled below; now Rowena's car glinted, now Daisy's. Then Rowena's slowed down at the steps, spitting stones.

Rowena came up and said, "I've just passed Daisy on the road."

"Yes, she's been here. What a tale!"

She looked into the empty cups. "And you didn't give your dearest friend any tea, you wretch."

"Oh, tea— No, she didn't want any," he stammered.

"As gripping as all that, was it?" she said with a laugh.

"Very," he said. "She's talking of marrying that young man. Stephen's not her son."

"You can't mean that," she said, putting on a very proper air. "She's old enough—" But she stopped, and instead of giving him one of her light hugs she rumpled his hair. "People do confide in you, I must say," she said. "I don't think I like her coming up here. Tell me what she said."

—V. S. PRITCHETT

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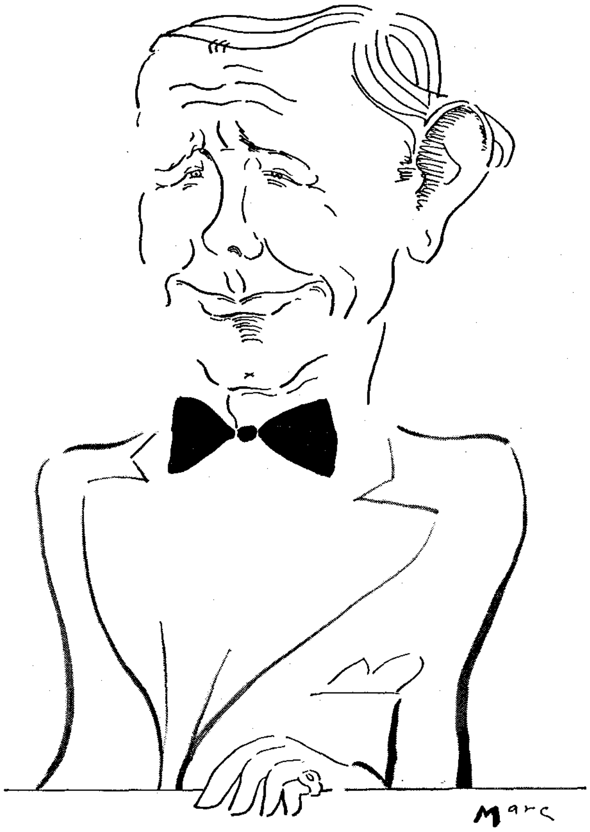
PROFILES

FIFTEEN YEARS OF THE SALTO MORTALE



Johnny Carson

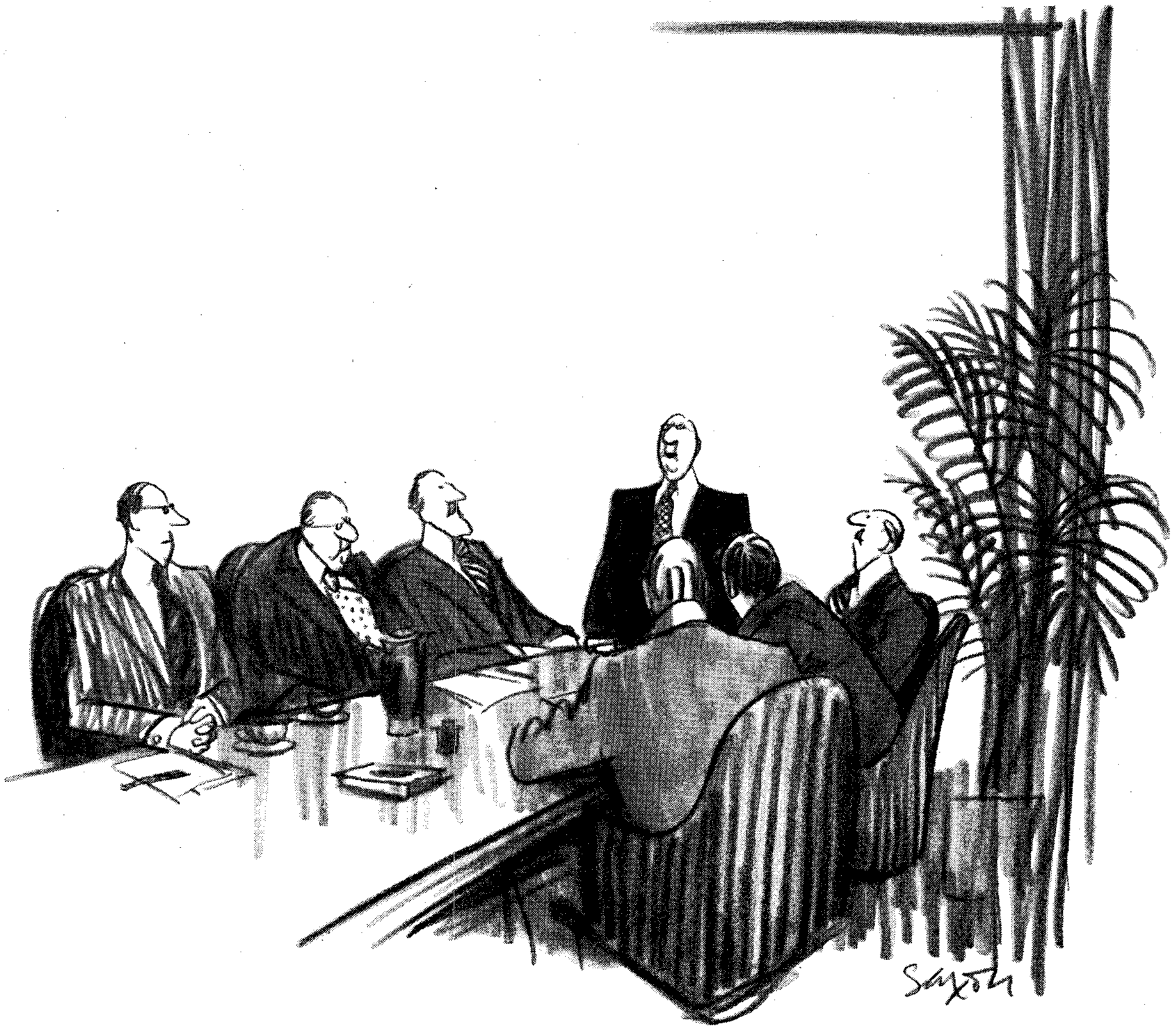
JULY 14, 1977: There is a dinner party tonight at the Beverly Hills home of Irving Lazar, doyen of agents and agent of doyens. The host is a diminutive potentate, as bald as a doorknob, who was likened by the late screenwriter Harry Kurnitz to "a very expensive rubber beach toy." He has represented many of the top-grossing movie directors and best-selling novelists of the past four decades, not always with their prior knowledge, since speed is of the essence in such transactions; and Lazar's flair for fleet-footed deal-clinching—sometimes on behalf of people who had never met him—has earned him the nickname of Swifty. On this occasion, at his behest and that of his wife, Mary (a sleek and catlike sorceress, deceptively demure, who could pass for her husband's ward), some fifty friends have gathered to mourn the departure of Fred de Cordova, who has been the producer of NBC's "Tonight Show" since 1970; he is about to leave for Europe on two weeks' vacation. A flimsy pretext, you may think, for a wingding; but, according to Beverly Hills protocol, anyone who quits the state of California for more than a long weekend qualifies for a farewell party, unless he is going to Las Vegas or New York, each of which counts as a colonial suburb of Los Angeles. Most of the Lazars' guests tonight are theatre and/or movie people; e.g., Elizabeth Ashley, Tony Curtis, Gregory Peck, Sammy Cahn, Ray Stark, Richard Brooks. And even Fred de Cordova spent twenty years working for the Shuberts, Warner Brothers, and Universal before he moved into television. The senior media still take social precedence in the upper and elder reaches of these costly hills.

One of the rare exceptions to this rule is the male latecomer who now enters, lean and dapper in an indigo blazer, white slacks, and a pale-blue open-necked shirt. Apart from two months in the late nineteen-fifties (when he replaced Tom Ewell in a Broadway comedy called "The Tunnel of Love"), Johnny Carson has never been seen on the legitimate stage; and, despite a multitude of offers, he has yet to appear in his first film. He does not, in fact, much like appearing *anywhere* except (a) in the audience at the Wimbledon tennis championships, which he and his wife recently attended, (b) at his home in Bel Air, and (c) before the NBC cameras in Burbank, which act on him like an addictive and galvanic drug. Just how the drug works is not known to science, but its effect is witnessed—ninety minutes per night, four nights per week, thirty-seven weeks per year—by upward of fourteen million viewers; and it provoked the actor Robert Blake, while he was being interviewed by Carson on the "Tonight Show" in 1976, to describe him with honest adulation as "the ace comedian top-dog talk artist of the universe." I once asked a bright young Manhattan journalist whether he could define in a single word what made television different from theatre or cinema. "For good or ill," he said, "Carson."

This pure and archetypal product of the box shuns large parties. Invitations from the Lazars are among the few he accepts. Tonight, he arrives alone (his wife, Joanna, has stopped off in New York for a few days' shopping), greets his host with the familiar smile, cordially wry, and scans the assembly, his eyes twinkling like icicles. Hard to believe, despite the pewter-colored hair, that he is fifty-one: he holds himself like the midshipman he once was, chin well tucked in, back as straight as a poker. (Carson claims to be five feet ten and a half inches in height. His pedantic insistence on that extra half inch betokens a man who suspects he looks small.) In repose, he resembles a king-sized ventriloquist's dummy. After winking impassively at de Cordova, he threads his way across the crowded living room and out through the ceiling-high sliding windows to the deserted swimming pool. Heads discreetly turn. Even in this posh peer group, Carson has cynosure status. Arms folded, he surveys Los Angeles by night—"glittering jewel of the Southland, gossamer web of loveliness," as Abe Burrows ironically called it. A waiter brings him a soft drink. "He looks like Gatsby," a young actress whispers to me. On the face of it, this is nonsense. Fitzgerald's hero suffers from star-crossed love, his wealth has criminal origins, and he loves to give flamboyant parties. But the simile is not without elements of truth. Gatsby, like Carson, is a Midwesterner, a self-made millionaire, and a habitual loner, armored against all attempts to invade his emotional privacy. "He had come a long way to this blue lawn," Fitzgerald wrote of Gatsby—as far as Carson has come to these blue pools, from which steam rises on even the warmest nights.

"He doesn't drink now." I turn to find Lazar beside me, also peeking at the man outside. He continues, "But I remember Johnny when he was a *blackout* drunk." That was before the "Tonight Show" moved from New York to Los Angeles, in 1972. "A couple of drinks was all it took. He could get very hostile."

I point out to Lazar that Carson's family tree has deep Irish roots on the maternal side. Was there something atavistic in his drinking? Or am I glibly casting him as an ethnic ("black Irish") stereotype? At all events, I now begin to see in him—still immo-



"Thank you, gentlemen. Although I'm resigning from this board, my thoughts will be with you. I intend to spend much of my time relaxing and painting, and my work will be shown at the Forbush Gallery, East Sixty-eighth Street, just off Park."

• •

bile by the pool—the lineaments of a magnified leprechaun.

"Like a lot of people in our business," Lazar goes on, "he's a mixture of extreme ego and extreme cowardice." In Lazar's lexicon, a coward is one who turns down starring roles suggested to him by Lazar.

Since Carson already does what nobody has ever done better, I reply, why should he risk his reputation by plunging into movies or TV specials?

Lazar concedes that I may be right. "But I'll tell you something else about him," he says, with italicized wonder. "*He's celibate.*" He means "chaste." "In his position, he could have all the girls he wants. It wouldn't be difficult. But he never cheats."

It is thirty minutes later. Carson is sitting at a table by the pool, where four or five people have joined him. He chats with impersonal affability, making no effort to dominate, charm, or amuse. I recall something that George Axelrod, the dramatist and screenwriter, once said to me about him: "Socially, he doesn't exist. The reason is that there are no television cameras in living rooms. If human beings had little red lights in the middle of their foreheads, Carson would be the greatest conversationalist on earth."

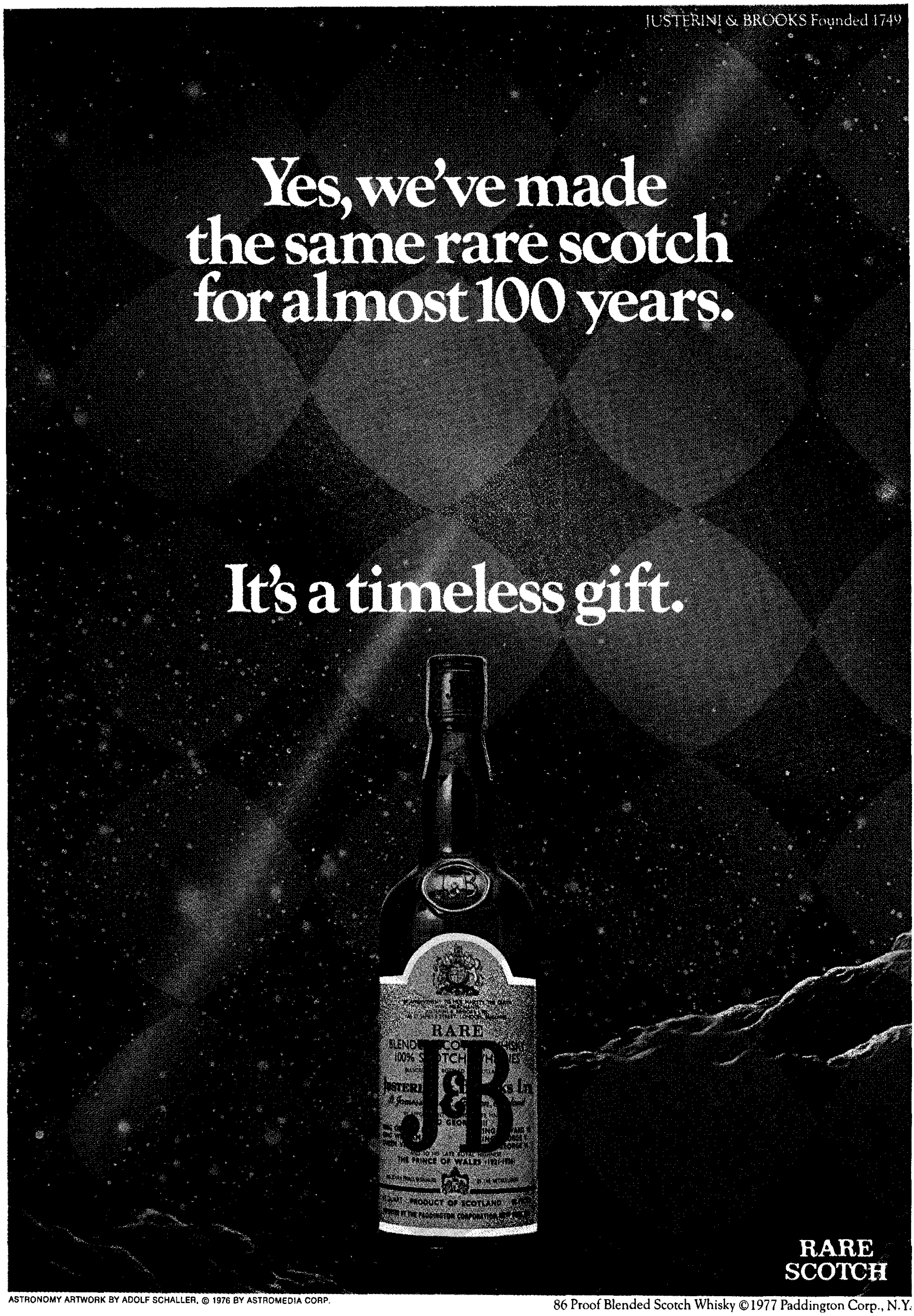
One of the guests is a girl whose hobby is numerology. Taking Carson as her subject, she works out a series of arcane sums and then offers her interpretation of his character. "You are an enormously mercurial person," she says, "who swings between very high highs and very low lows."

His eyebrows rise, the corners of his lips turn down: this is the mock-affronted expression he presents to the camera when a baby armadillo from some local zoo declines to respond to his caresses. "This girl is great," he says to de Cordova. "She makes me sound like a cross between Spring Byington and Adolf Hitler."

Before long, he departs as unobtrusively as he came.

MEETING him a few days afterward, I inquire what he thought of the party. He half grins, half winces. "Torturous?" he says.

Within a month, however, I note that he is back in the same torture chamber. Characteristically, although he is surrounded by the likes of Jack Lemmon, Roger Vadim, Michael Caine, James Stewart, and Gene Kelly, he spends most of the evening locked in NBC shoptalk with Fred de Cordova. De Cordova has just returned from his European safari, which has taken him through four countries in half as many weeks. The high point of the trip, de Cordova tells me, was a visit to Munich, where his old friend Billy Wilder was making a film. This brings to mind a recent conversation I had with Wilder in this very living room. He is a master of acerbic put-downs who has little time for TV pseudostars, and when I mentioned the name of Carson I expected Wilder to dismiss him with a mordant one-liner. What he actually said surprised me. It evolved in the form of a speech. "By the simple law of survival, Carson is the best," he said. "He enchants the invalids and the insomniacs as well as the people who have to get up at dawn. He is the Valium and the Nembutal of a nation. No matter what kind of dead-asses are on the show, he has to make them funny and exciting. He has to be their nurse and their surgeon. He has no conceit. He does his work and he comes prepared. If he's talking to an author, he has read the book. Even his rehearsed routines sound improvised. He's the cream of middle-class elegance, yet he's not a mannequin. He has captivated the American bourgeoisie without ever offending the highbrows, and he has never said anything that wasn't liberal or progressive. Every night, in front of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millions of people, he has to do the *salto mortale*"—circus parlance for an aerial somersault performed on the tightrope. "What's more"—and here Wilder leaned forward, tapping my knee for emphasis—"he does it without a net. No rewrites. No retakes. The jokes must work tonight."

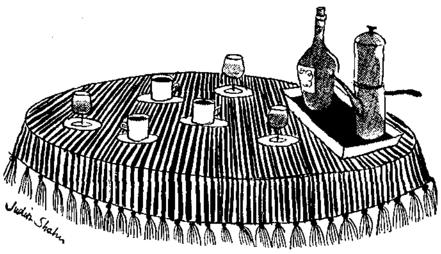
SINCE a good deal of what follows consists of excerpts from the journal of a Carson-watcher, I feel bound to declare a financial interest, and to admit that I have derived pecuniary benefit from his activities. During the nineteen-sixties, I was twice interviewed on the "Tonight Show." For each appearance I received three hundred and twenty dollars, which was then the minimum payment authorized by AFTRA, the TV and radio performers' union. (The figure has since risen to four hundred and twenty-seven dollars.) No guest on the show, even if he or she does a solo spot in addition to just chatting, is paid more than the basement-level fee. On two vertiginous occasions, therefore, my earning power has equalled that of Frank Sinatra, who in November, 1976, occupied the hot seat on Carson's right for the first time. (A strange and revealing encounter, to which we'll return.) Actually, "hot" is a misnomer. To judge from my own experience, "glacial" would be nearer the mark. The other talk shows in which I have taken part were all saunas by comparison with Carson's. Merv Griffin is the most disarming of ego strokers; Mike Douglas runs him a close second in the ingratiation stakes; and Dick Cavett creates the illusion that *he* is *your* guest, enjoying a slightly subversive private chat. Carson, on the other hand, operates on a level of high, freewheeling, centrifugal banter that is well above the snow line. Which is not to say that he is hostile. Carson treats you with deference and genuine curiosity. But the air is chill; you are definitely on probation.

Mort Sahl, who was last seen on the "Tonight Show" in 1968, described to me not long ago what happens when a guest fails to deliver the goods. "The producer is crouching just off camera," he said, "and he holds up a card that says, 'Go to commercial.' So Carson goes to a commercial, and the whole team rushes up to his desk to discuss what went wrong. It's like a pit stop at Le Mans. Then the next guest comes in, and—I promise you this is true—she's a girl who says straight out that she's a practicing lesbian. The card goes up again, only this time it means, 'Come in at once, your right rear wheel is on fire.' So we go to another commercial. . . ." Sahl is one of the few performers who are willing to be quoted in dispraise of Carson. Except for a handful of really big names, people in show business need Carson more than he needs them; they hate to jeopardize their chance of appearing on the program that pays greater dividends in publicity than any other. "Carson's assumption is that the audience is dumb, so you mustn't do difficult things," Sahl continued. "He never takes serious risks. His staff will only book people who'll make him look artistically potent. They won't give him anyone who'll take him for fifteen rounds. The whole operation has got lazy."

When an interviewer from *Playboy* asked Robert Blake whether he enjoyed doing the "Tonight Show," he gave a vivid account of how it feels to face Carson. He began by confessing that "there's a certain enjoyment in facing death, periodically." He went on:

> There's no experience I can describe to you that would compare with doin' the "Tonight Show" when *he's* on it. It is so wired, and so hyped, and so up. It's like Broadway on opening night. There's nothing casual about it. And it's not a talk show. It's some other kind of show. I mean, he has such energy, you got like six minutes to do your thing. . . . And you better be good. Or they'll go to the commercial after two minutes. . . . They are highly professional, highly successful, highly dedicated people. . . . The producer, all the *federales* are sittin' like six feet away from that couch. And they're right on top of you, man, just watchin' ya. And when they go to a break, they get on the phone. They talk upstairs, they talk to—Christ, who knows? They talk all over the place about how this person's going over, how that person's going over. They whisper in John's ear. John gets on the phone and he talks. And you're sittin' there watchin', thinkin', What, are they gonna hang somebody? . . . And then the camera comes back again. And John will ask you somethin' else or he'll say, "Our next guest is . . ."

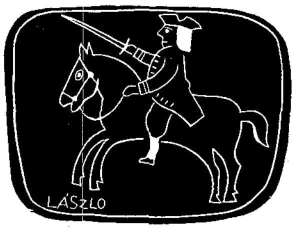
Carson's office suite at Burbank is above the studio in which, between 5:30 and 7 P.M., the show is taped. Except for his secretary, the rest of the production team occupies a crowded bungalow more than two hundred yards away, outside the main building.



"In the past couple of months," a receptionist in the bungalow said to me not long ago, "I've seen Mr. Carson in here just once." Thus the king keeps his distance—not merely from his colleagues but from his guests, with whom he never fraternizes either before or after the taping. Or hardly ever: he may decide, if a major celebrity is on hand, to bend the rule and grant him or her the supreme privilege of prior contact. But such occasions are rare. As Orson Welles said to me, "he's the only invisible talk host." A Carson guest of long standing, Welles continued, "Once, before the show, he put his head into my dressing room and said hello. The effect was cataclysmic. The production staff behaved the way the stagehands did at the St. James's Theatre in London twenty-five years ago when Princess Margaret came backstage to visit me. They were in awe! One of Carson's people stared at me and said, 'He actually came to *see* you!' " (Gust of Wellesian laughter.) Newcomers like me are interviewed several days in advance by one of Carson's "talent coördinators," who makes a list of the subjects on which you are likely to be eloquent or funny. This list is in Carson's head as you plunge through the rainbow-hued curtains, take a sharp right turn, and just avoid tripping over the cunningly placed step that leads up to the desk where you meet, for the first time, your host, interrogator, and judge. The studio is his native habitat. Like a character in a Harold Pinter play, or any living creature in a Robert Ardrey book, you have invaded his territory. Once you are on Carson's turf, the onus is on you to demonstrate your right to stay there; if you fail, you will decorously get the boot. You feel like the tourist who on entering the Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, was greeted by a guide with the minatory remark "Remember, Signore, that here it is not the pictures that are on trial." Other talk hosts flatter their visitors with artificial guffaws; Carson laughs only when he is amused. All I recall of my first exposure to the Carson ordeal is that (a) I had come to discuss a controversial play about Winston Churchill, (b) the act I had to follow was the TV début of Tiny Tim, who sang "Tip Toe Through the Tulips," (c) Carson froze my marrow by suddenly asking my opinion not of Churchill but of General de Gaulle, and (d) from that moment on, fear robbed me of saliva, so that my lips clove to my gums, rendering coherent speech impossible. The fault was mine, for not being the sort of person who can rise to Carson's challenge—i.e., a professional performer. There is abundant evidence that comedians, when they are spurred by Carson, take off and fly as they cannot in any other company. David Brenner, who has been a regular Carson guest since 1971, speaks for many young entertainers when he says, "Nowhere is where I'd be without the 'Tonight Show.' It's a necessary ingredient. . . . TV excels in two areas—sports and Carson. The show made my career."

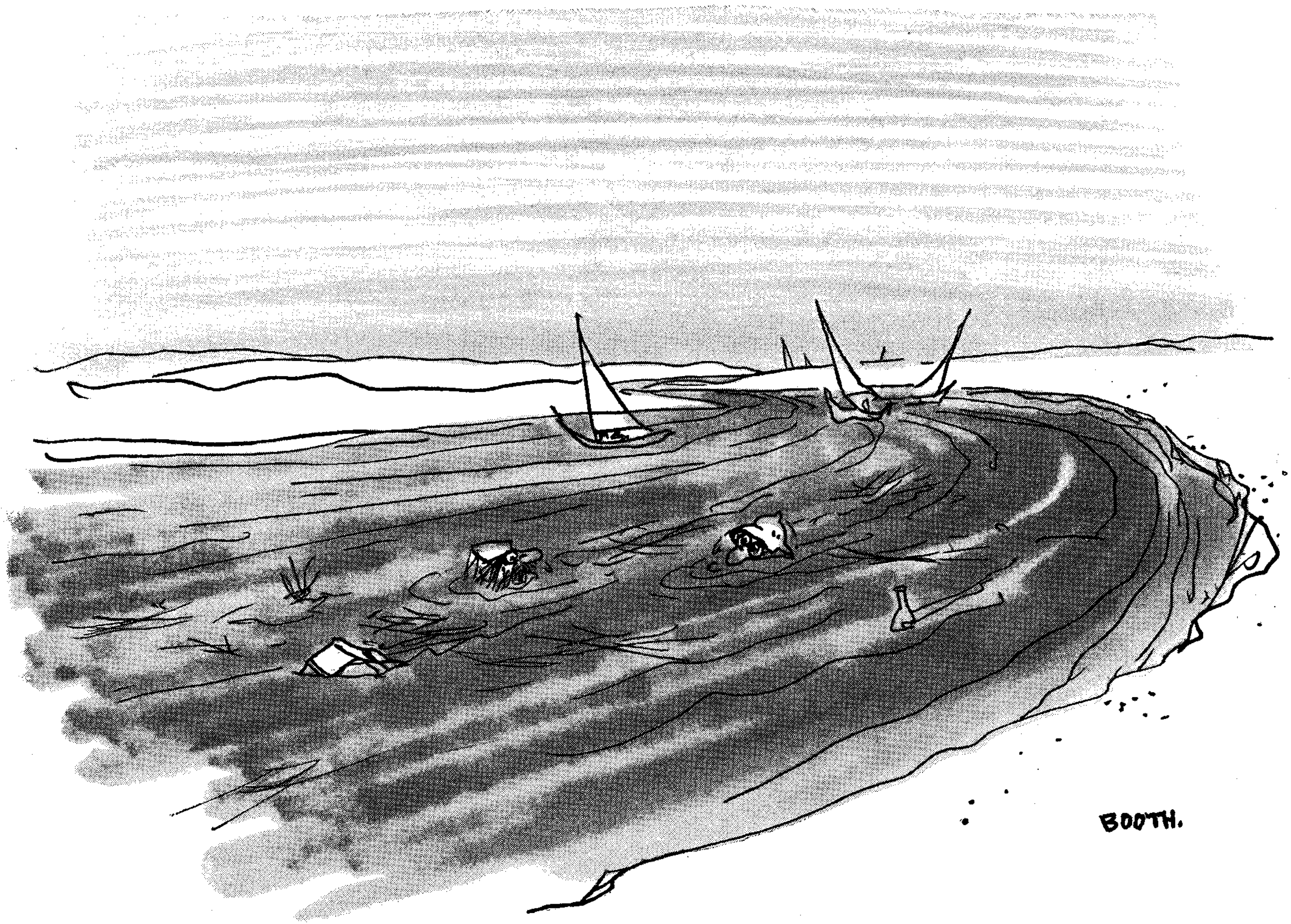
OCTOBER 1, 1977, marked Carson's fifteenth anniversary as the star of a program he recently called "NBC's answer to foreplay." For purposes of comparison, it may be noted that Steve Allen, who was the show's host when it was launched, in September, 1954, lasted only two years and four months. The mercurial and thin-skinned Jack (Slugger) Paar took over from Allen in the summer of 1957, after a six-month interregnum during which doomed attempts were made to turn the "Tonight Show" into a nocturnal TV magazine, held together by live contributions from journalists in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Paar's tenure of office seems in retrospect longer than it was, perhaps because of the emotional outbursts that kept his name constantly in the headlines; it actually ended after four years and eight months. On March 29, 1962, having resigned for positively the last time, he took his final bow on the program, his face a cascade of tears. "*Après le déluge, moi*" is the thought that should have passed through Carson's mind, though there is no evidence that it did. He was then in his fifth year as m.c. of "Who Do You Trust?," an ABC quiz show that had become, largely because of his verbal dexterity, the hottest item on daytime television. A few months before Paar's farewell, Carson had turned down a firm offer from NBC to replace its top banana. The gulf between chatting with unknown contestants for half an hour every afternoon and matching wits with celebrities for what was then an hour and forty-five minutes every night seemed unnervingly wide, and he doubted his ability to bridge it. However, when the job had been rejected by a number of possible candidates—among them Bob Newhart, Jackie Gleason, Joey Bishop, and Groucho Marx—either because they wanted too much money or because they were chary of following Paar, NBC came back in desperation to Carson. This time, he asked for two weeks to consider the proposition. Coolly, he weighed the size of his talent against the size of his ambition, decided that the scales approximately balanced, and told NBC that his answer was yes. The only snag was that his contract with ABC did not run out until September. Undismayed, NBC agreed to keep the "Tonight Show" supplied with guest hosts (they included Merv Griffin, Mort Sahl, and Groucho) throughout the summer. On October 1, 1962, Carson took command. His announcer and second banana, transplanted from "Who Do You Trust?," was Ed McMahon, who was already in great demand as the owner of the most robust and contagious laugh in television. The guests were Rudy Vallée, Tony Bennett, Mel Brooks (then a mere comedy writer, though he nowadays insists that he gave a dazzling impersonation of Fred Astaire on that October evening), and Joan Crawford.

Any qualms that NBC may have had about its new acquisition were soon allayed. Star performers lined up to appear with Carson. Even his fellow-comedians, a notoriously paranoid species, found that working with him was a stimulus rather than a threat. "He loves it when you score," Woody Allen said, "and he's witty enough to score himself." Mel Brooks has explained to me, "From the word go, Carson could tell when you'd hit comic gold, and he'd help you to mine it. He always knew pay dirt when he saw it. The guys on other talk shows didn't." There were one or two dissenters. Jackie Mason enjoyed his first session with Carson but reported that during his second appearance he was treated with "undisguised alienation and contempt," and went on to say, "I'd never go back again, even if he asked me." The press reaction to Carson was enthusiastic, except for a blast of puritanism from John Horn, of the *Herald Tribune*, who wrote of Carson, "He exhibits all the charm of a snickering small boy scribbling graffiti on a public wall." He added, in one of those phrases that return to haunt critics in their declining years, that Carson had "*no apparent gift for the performing arts.*"



With the public, Carson's triumph was immediate and nonpareil. Under the Paar regime, the show had very seldom been seen by more than seven and a half million viewers. (One such occasion was March 7, 1960, when the unruly star came back to his post after walking out in a fit of pique, brought on by the network's decision to delete a mildly scatological joke and protracted for several well-publicized weeks.) Under Carson, the program *averaged* seven million four hundred and fifty-eight thousand viewers per night during its first six months. The comparable figure for the same period in 1971-72 was eleven million four hundred and forty-one thousand, and it is currently being seen by seventeen million three hundred thousand. Over fifteen years, therefore, Carson has more than doubled his audience—a feat that, in its blend of staying power and mounting popularity, is without precedent in the history of television. (Between April and September, the numbers dip, but this reflects a seasonal pattern by which all TV shows are affected. A top NBC executive explained to me, with heartless candor, "People who can afford vacations go away in the summer. It's only the poor people who watch us all the year round.") By network standards, the ultimate test is not so much the size of the audience as the share it represents of the total viewing public in the show's time slot. Here, after some early ups and downs, the Carson trend has been consistently upward; for example, from twenty-eight per cent in the third quarter of 1976 to thirty per cent in the second quarter of 1977. Moreover, his percentage seems to rise with the temperature; for example, in the four weeks that ended on July 15, 1977—a period during which guest hosts frequently stood in for Carson, whose absence from the show normally cuts the audience by about one-sixth—NBC chalked up thirty-two per cent of the late-night viewers, against twenty-four per cent registered by CBS and twenty-three per cent by ABC. These, of course, are national figures. The happiness of Fred de Cordova, as producer, is incomplete unless Carson not only leads the field nationwide but beats the combined opposition (ABC plus CBS) in the big cities, especially New York and Los Angeles. He is seldom unhappy for long. On peak nights, when Carson rakes in a percentage of fifty or more from the key urban centers, de Cordova is said to emit an unearthly glow, visible clear across the Burbank parking lot.

For his first year on the show, making five appearances per week, Carson was paid just over a hundred thousand dollars. His present contract (the latest of many), which comes into force this spring, guarantees him an annual salary of two and a half million dollars. For twenty-five weeks of



"Perhaps the Mesopotamians abandoned the reed vessel at this juncture, Professor, and continued by dhow?"

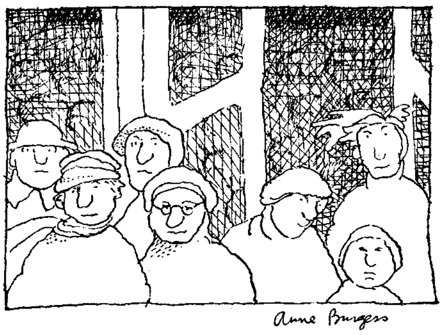
• •

the year, his performances, which were long since reduced from five to four, will further dwindle, to three; and his vacation period will stay at fifteen weeks—its duration under several previous contracts. These details, which were announced by NBC last December, leave no doubt that Carson qualifies for admission to what the late Lucius Beebe called "the mink-dust-cloth set." Whether they tell the whole story is less certain. Carson's earlier agreements with NBC contained clauses that both parties were forbidden to disclose, reportedly relating to such additional rewards as large holdings in RCA stock and a million-dollar life-insurance policy at the network's expense. Concerning Carson's total earnings, I cannot do better than quote from one of his employers, who told me, months before the new contract was signed, "If someone were to say in print that Johnny takes home around four million a year, I doubt whether anyone at NBC would feel an overpowering urge to issue a statement denying it." And even this figure excludes the vast amounts he makes from appearances at resort centers—preëminently Las Vegas—and from Johnny Carson Apparel, Inc., a thriving menswear business, founded in 1970, whose products he models on the show. David Tebet, the senior vice-president of NBC, who is revered in the trade as a finder, keeper, and cosseter of talent, and is described in his publicity handout as being "solely in charge of the Johnny Carson show," said to me recently, "For the past four or five years, Johnny has made more money per annum than any other television performer ever has. And he has also made more money per *week* than anyone else—except, maybe, for a very rare case like Sinatra, where you can't be sure, because Sinatra will sell you a special through his own company and you don't know how much he's personally taking out of the deal." Despite the high cost of Carson, he remains a bargain. The network's yearly income from the show is at present between fifty and sixty million dollars. "As a money-maker," de Cordova says, "there's nothing in television close to it." In 1975, a sixty-second commercial on the program cost twenty-six thousand dollars. In 1977, that sum had risen by half.

I dwell on these statistics because they are unique in show business. Yet there is a weird disproportion between the facts and figures of Carson's success and the kind of fame he enjoys. To illustrate what I mean, let me cite a few analogies. Star tennis players are renowned in every country on earth outside China, and the same is true of top heavyweight boxers. (A probable exception in the latter category is Muhammad Ali, who must surely be known inside China as well.) At least fifty living cricketers are household names throughout the United Kingdom, the West Indies, Australia, South Africa, India, and Pakistan. Movie stars and pop singers command international celebrity; and Kojak, Starsky, Hutch, Columbo, and dozens more are acclaimed (or, at any rate, recognized) wherever the TV programs that bear their names are bought and transmitted. Outside North America, by contrast, Johnny Carson is a nonentity: the general public has never heard of him. The reason for his obscurity is that the job at which he excels is virtually unexportable. (O. J. Simpson is a parallel case, illustrious at home and *nada* abroad; and if the empire of baseball had not reached out and annexed Japan, Reggie Jackson would be in the same plight.) The TV talk show as it is practiced by Carson is topical in subject matter and local in appeal. To watch it is like dropping in on a nightly family party, a conversational serial, full of private jokes, in which a relatively small and regularly rotated cast of characters, drawn mainly from show business, turn up to air their egos, but which has absolutely no plot. Sometimes the visitors sing. Sometimes, though less often nowadays than in the past, they are people of such worldwide distinction that their slightest hiccup is riveting. But otherwise most of what happens on the show would be incomprehensible or irrelevant to foreign audiences, even if they were English-speaking. This drives yet another nail into the coffin lid, already well hammered down, of Marshall McLuhan's theory that TV has transformed the world into a global village. (Radio is, as it has long been, the only medium that gives us immediate access to what the rest of the planet is doing and thinking, simply because every country of any size operates a foreign-language service.) Only for such events as moon landings and Olympiads does TV provide live coverage that spans the globe. The rest of the time, it is obstinately provincial, addressing itself to a village no bigger than a nation. Carson, in his own way, is what Gertrude Stein called Ezra Pound—a village explainer.

He has spent almost all his life confined, like his fame, to his country of origin. He served in the Navy for three years, beginning in 1943, and was shipped as far west as Guam. Thereafter, his travels abroad indicate no overwhelming curiosity about the world outside his homeland. Apart from brief vacations in Mexico, and a flying visit to London in 1961, when he appeared in a TV special starring Paul Anka, he has left the United States only on three trips: in 1975, to the ultrasmart Hôtel du Cap in Antibes (at the instigation of his wife, Joanna, who had been there before); in 1976, to see the tennis at Wimbledon; and in 1977, when he threw caution to the winds and went to both Wimbledon *and* the Hôtel du Cap. He was recognized in neither place, except by a handful of fellow-Americans. This, of course, was the purpose of the exercise. Carson goes to foreign parts for the solace of anonymity. But enough is enough: he is soon impatient to return to the cavernous Burbank studio, where his personality burgeons in high definition, and where he publicly discloses as much of his private self as he has ever revealed to anyone, except (I assume, though even here I would not care to bet) his parents, siblings, sons, and wives.

"Johnny Carson on TV," one of his colleagues confided to me, "is the visible eighth of an iceberg called Johnny Carson." The remark took me back to something that Carson said of himself ten years ago, when, in the course of a question-and-answer session with viewers, he was asked, "What made you a star?" He replied, "I started out in a gaseous state, and then I cooled." Meeting him tête-à-tête is, as we shall see later, a curious experience. In 1966, writing for *Look*, Betty Rollin described Carson off camera as "testy, defensive, preoccupied, withdrawn, and wondrously inept and uncomfortable with people." Nowadays, his off-camera manner is friendly and impeccably diplomatic. Even so, you get the impression that you are addressing an elaborately wired security system. If the conversation edges toward areas in which he feels ill at ease or unwilling to commit himself, burglar alarms are triggered off, defensive reflexes rise around him like an invisible stockade, and you hear the distant baying of guard dogs. In addition to his childhood, his private life, and his income, these no-trespassing zones include all subjects of political controversy, any form of sexual behavior uncountenanced by the law, and such matters of social concern as abortion and the legalization of marijuana. His smile as he steers you away from forbidden territory is genial and unfading. It is only fair to remember that he does not pretend to be a pundit, employed to express his own opinions; rather, he is a professional explorer of other people's egos. In a magazine article that was published with annotations by Carson, Fred de Cordova wrote, "He's reluctant to talk much about himself because he is essentially a private person." To this Carson added a marginal gloss, intended as a gag, that had an eerie ring of truth: "I will not even talk to myself without an appointment." He has asked all the questions and knows all the evasive, equivocal answers. When he first signed to appear on the "Tonight Show," he was quizzed by the press so relentlessly that he refused after a while to submit to further interrogation. Instead, he issued a list of replies that journalists could append to any questions of their choice:



1. Yes, I did.
2. Not a bit of truth in that rumor.
3. Only twice in my life, both times on Saturday.
4. I can do either, but I prefer the first.
5. No. Kumquats.
6. I can't answer that question.
7. Toads and tarantulas.
8. Turkestan, Denmark, Chile, and the Komandorskie Islands.
9. As often as possible, but I'm not very good at it yet. I need much more practice.
10. It happened to some old friends of mine, and it's a story I'll never forget.

EXTRACT from Carson-watching journal, January, 1976:

There is such a thing as the pleasure of the expected. Opening routine of "Tonight Show" provides it; millions would feel cheated if the ceremony were changed. The close shot of Big Ed McMahon as his unctuous baritone takes off on its steeply ascending glissando "Heeeeeeeere's Johnny!" Stagehands create gap in curtain. Carson enters in his ritual Apparel, style of which is Casual Square. Typical outfit: checked sports coat with two vents, tan trousers, pale-blue shirt with neat but ungaudy tie. Not for him the blue-jeaned, open-necked, safari-jacketed Hollywood ensemble: that would be too Casual, too Californian. On the other hand, no dark suits with vests: that would be too Square, too Eastern Seaboard. Carson must reflect what de Cordova possessively calls "our bread-basket belt"—the Midwest, which bore him (on October 23, 1925, in Corning, Iowa), and which he must never bore.

On his lips as he walks toward applauding audience is the only unassuming smirk in show business. He halts and swivels to the right (upper part of body turning as rigid vertical unit, like that of man in plaster cast) to acknowledge Big Ed's traditional act of obeisance, a quasi-Hindu bow with fingertips reverently joined. Then the leftward rotation, to accept homage from Doc Severinsen—lead trumpet and musical director, hieratically clad in something skintight and ragingly vulgar—which takes more bizarrely

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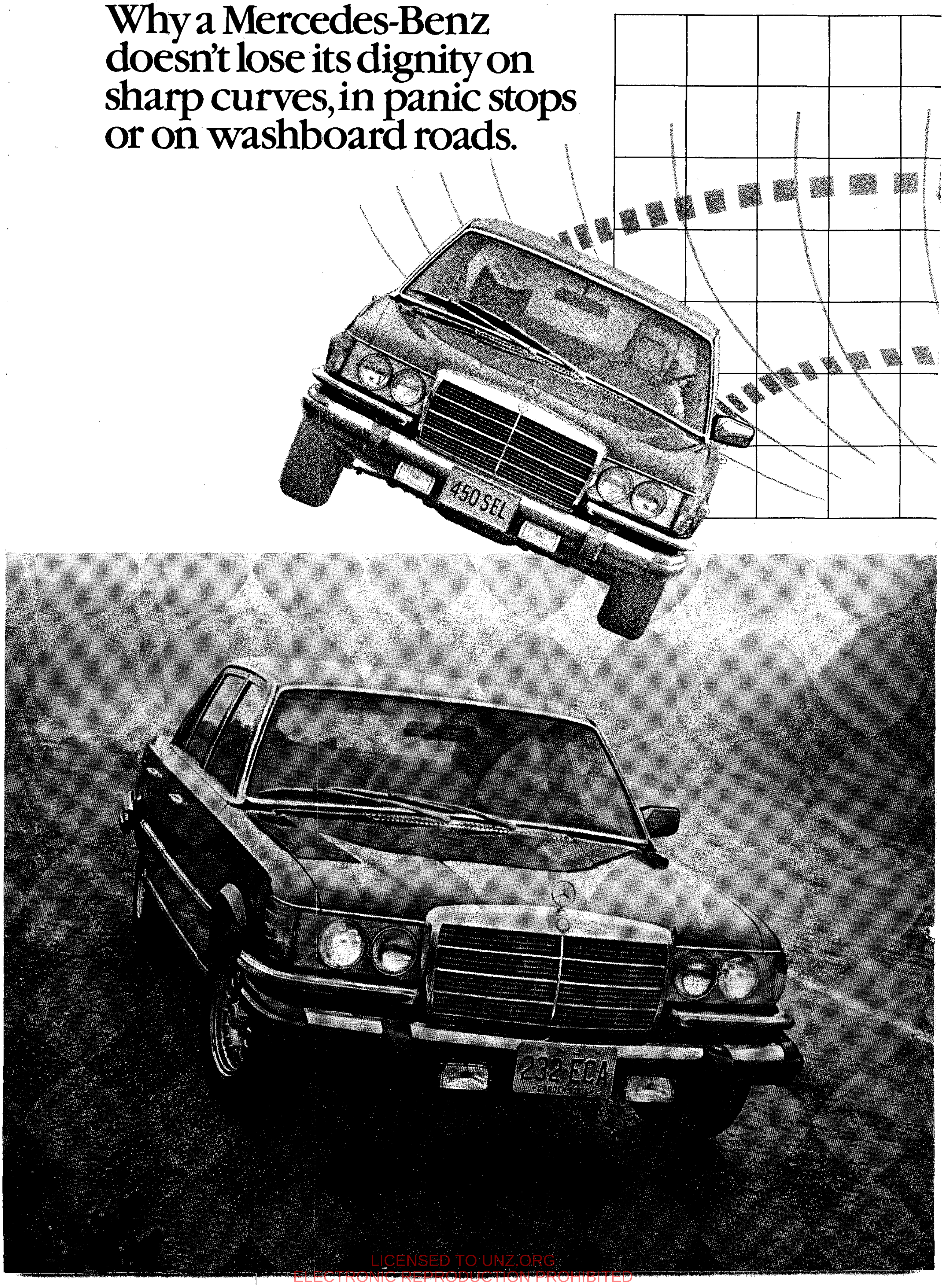
Why a Mercedes-Benz doesn't lose its dignity on sharp curves, in panic stops or on washboard roads.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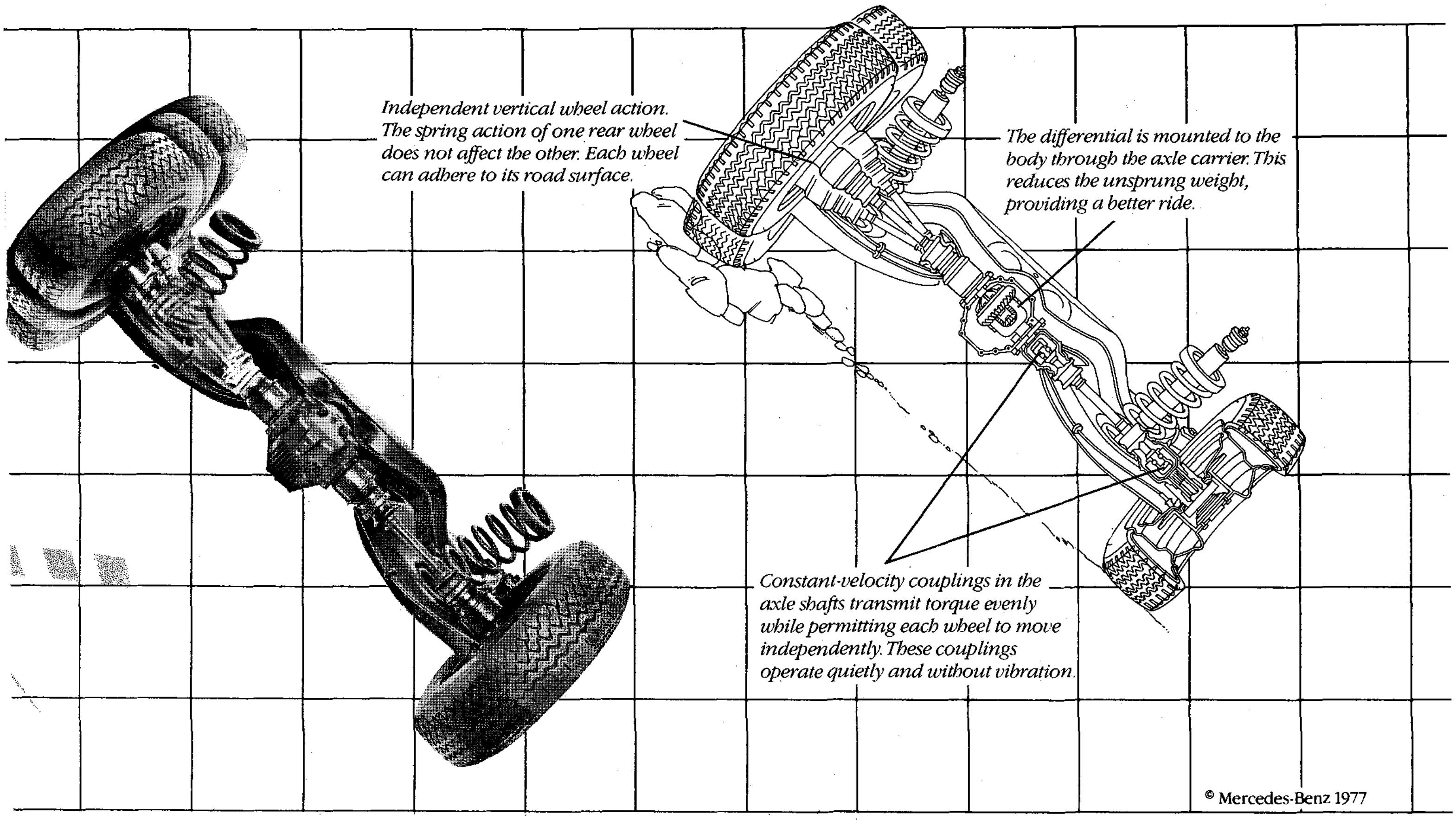

Independent vertical wheel action. The spring action of one rear wheel does not affect the other. Each wheel can adhere to its road surface.

The differential is mounted to the body through the axle carrier. This reduces the unsprung weight, providing a better ride.

Constant-velocity couplings in the axle shafts transmit torque evenly while permitting each wheel to move independently. These couplings operate quietly and without vibration.

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In 1931 Mercedes-Benz engineers launched a new era of driving comfort, performance and safety by introducing 4-wheel independent suspension. For the next 46 years they continued to modify and improve this revolutionary concept in the quest of perfection. Their achievements are reflected in the new Mercedes-Benz automobiles of today.

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Four-wheel independent suspension put the automobile on the road to greater safety.

For the first time *every* wheel of a passenger car could adapt to rough road surfaces without losing a sure grip.

And since the wheels acted *independently*, if one encountered a soft shoulder or pothole, the remaining three wheels could handle the annoyance with greater safety than was ever before possible.

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In 1954 Mercedes-Benz introduced single-joint swing axles to passenger cars. This gave the driver a surer feel of the road. It also let a Mercedes-Benz step nimbly, up and over brutal bumps and around tight curves with much less transmitted vibration.

In 1961 air suspension with automatic level adjustment was engineered into the 300 SE sedans. It eliminated even more vibration and added an even smoother ride. In 1968 diagonal-pivot swing rear axles with four constant-velocity couplings were designed in to keep that smooth ride constant.

Then in 1972 Mercedes-Benz introduced zero-offset steering on the front suspension of the 450 Series sedans. This helped straight-line tracking under heavy braking conditions and provided more precise steering control in emergencies like blowouts.

The suspension of the future

It's the ingeniously engineered hydropneumatic suspension on all four wheels of the Mercedes-Benz 6.9. It gives the driver a level of control almost unmatched by any other 4-door sedan. It provides exceptional stability, even on curves or dirt roads laced with potholes.

Why does Mercedes-Benz go to all this trouble just to keep four wheels on the road? Simple: The engineers believe their job is to advance the state of the automotive art.

They continually strive to find better ways to make a Mercedes-Benz even easier to drive. So the driver has more time to keep his mind on the road ahead. Fatigue is reduced by blessing him with an *absence* of vibration, bouncing, swaying and undue noise.

Safety first

All cars surround you with safety belts. A Mercedes-Benz also surrounds you with an additional belt of safety: a unitized steel protected passenger shell which is designed to help absorb impact energy.

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People give many reasons for choosing a Mercedes-Benz.

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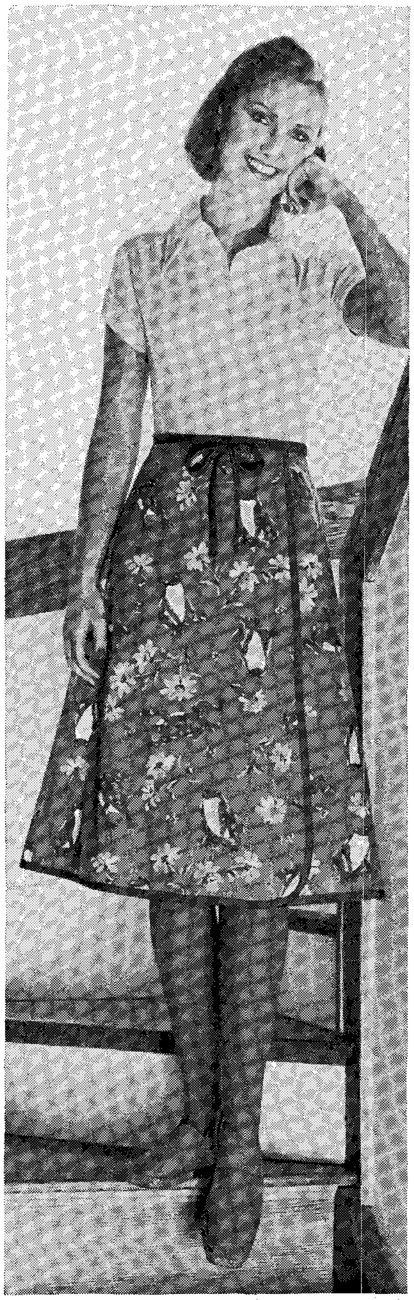
It is to build safe, comfortable, practical cars—with as few imperfections as possible.

This philosophy puts engineering ahead of petty economies and precludes the mass production of inexpensive cars.

It allows little room for compromise or for shortcuts; just the pursuit of engineering excellence.

A Mercedes-Benz is engineered like no other car in the world.



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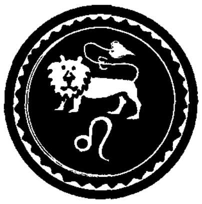
Oriental form: the head humbly bowed while the hands orbit each other. Music stops; applause persists. In no hurry, Carson lets it ride, facially responding to every nuance of audience behavior; e.g., shouts of greeting, cries of "Hi-yo!" When the ecstasy subsides, the exordium is over, and Carson begins the monologue, or address to the faithful, which must contain (according to one of his writers) between sixteen and twenty-two surefire jokes.

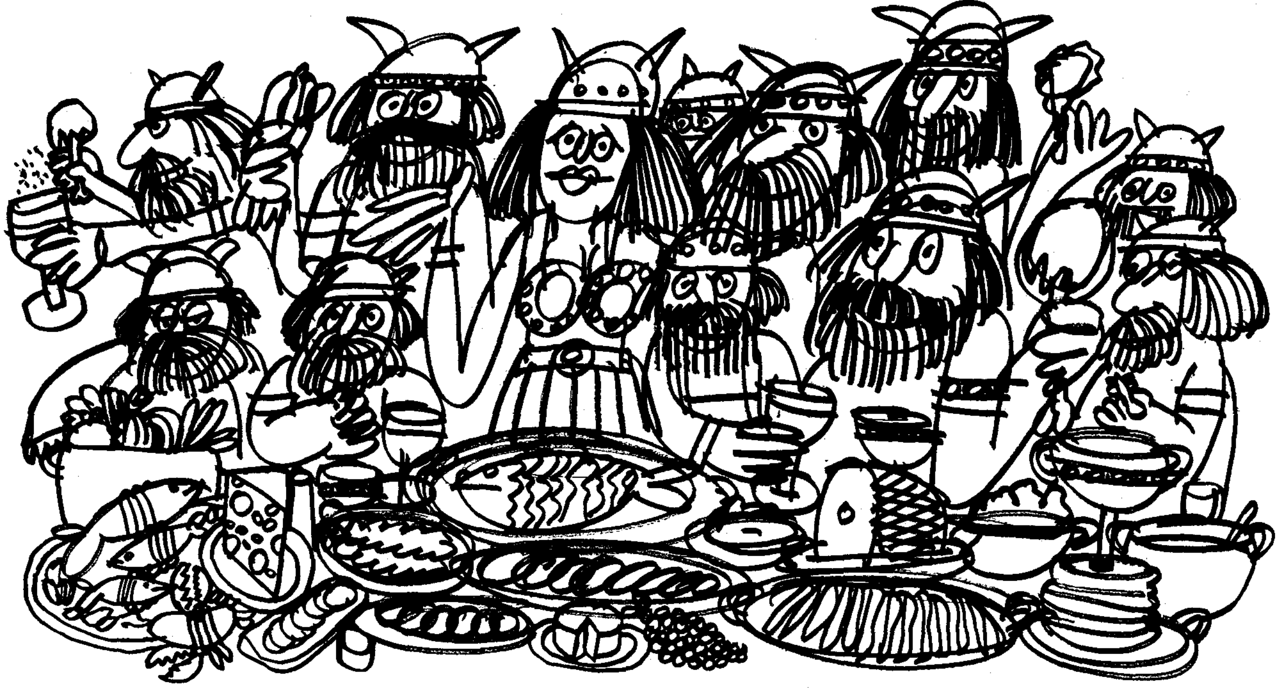
Tone of monologue is skeptical, tongue-in-cheek, ironic. Manner: totally relaxed, hitting bull's-eyes without seeming to take aim, TV's embodiment of "Zen in the Art of Archery." In words uttered to me by the late screenwriter Nunnally Johnson, "Carson has a delivery like a Winchester rifle." Theme: implicitly liberal, but careful to avoid the stigma of leftism. The unexpected impromptus with which he rescues himself from gags that bomb, thereby plucking triumph from disaster, are also part of the expected pleasure. "When it comes to saving a bad line, he is the master"—to quote a tribute paid in my presence by George Burns. Carson registers a gag's impact with instant, seismographical finesse. If the laugh is five per cent less than he counted on, he notes the failure and reacts to it ("Did they clear the hall? Did they have a drill?") before any critic could, usually garnering a double-strength guffaw as reward. Whatever spoils a line—ambiguous phrasing, botched timing, faulty enunciation—he is the first to expose it. Nobody spots flaws in his own work more swiftly than Carson, or capitalizes on them more effectively. Query: Is this becoming a dangerous expertise? In other words, out from under how many collapsed jokes can you successfully climb?

This evening's main attraction is Don (The Enforcer) Rickles, not so much the court jester of TV as the court hit man. Carson can cope superbly with garrulous guests who tell interminable stories (whether ponderously, owing to drink or downers, or manically, owing to uppers or illicit inhalations). Instead of quickly changing the subject, as many hosts would, he slaughters the offenders with pure politesse. Often, he will give them enough rope to hang themselves, allowing them to ramble on while he affects attentive interest. Now and then, however, he will let the camera catch him in the act of half-stifling a yawn, or raising a baffled eyebrow, or aiming straight at the lens a stare of frozen, I-think-I-am-going-mad incredulity. He prevents us from being bored by making his own boredom funny—a daring feat of comic one-upmanship. The way in which he uses the camera as a silent conspirator is probably Carson's most original contribution to TV technique. There is a lens permanently trained on him alone—a private pipeline through which he transmits visual asides directly to the viewer, who thus becomes his flattered accomplice. Once, talking to me on a somewhat tattered theme, the difference between stage and screen acting, Paul Newman made a remark that seemed obvious at the time but grows in wisdom the more I ponder it. "On the stage, you have to seek the focus of the audience," he said. "In movies, it's given to you by the camera." Among the marks of a star on television, as in the cinema, is his or her ability to grasp this truth and act on it. Seek, and you shall not find; grab, and it shall not be given unto you. Carson learned these rules early and is now their master practitioner.

Even the best-planned talk shows, however, run into doldrums; e.g., the guest who suffers from incontinent sycophancy, or whose third marriage has brought into his life a new sense of wonder plus three gratingly cute anecdotes about the joys of paternity, or who is a British comedian on his first, tongue-tied trip to the States, or whose conversational range is confined to plugging an upcoming appearance at Lake Tahoe. On such occasions, the ideal solution is: Bring on Rickles, king of icebreakers, whose chosen weapon is the verbal hand grenade. Rickles is an unrivalled catalyst (though I can already hear him roaring, "What do you mean, I'm a catalyst? I'm a Jew!"). Squatly built, rather less bald than Mussolini, his bulbous face running the gamut from jovial contempt to outright nausea, he looks like an extra in a crowd scene by Hieronymus Bosch. No one is immune from his misanthropy; he exudes his venom at host and guests alike. In a medium ruled by the censorious Superego, Rickles is the unchained Id. At his best, he breaks through the bad-taste barrier into a world of sheer outrage where no forbidden thought goes unspoken and where everything spoken is anarchically liberating. More deftly than anyone else, Carson knows how to play matador to Rickles' bull, inciting him to charge, and sometimes getting gored himself. At one point during this pro-



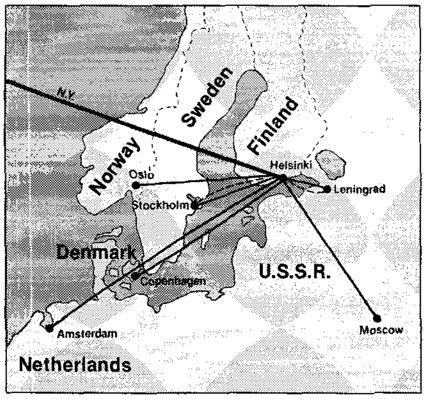
How Henni Salmi, the Finn, accidentally created the world's first smörgåsbord back in 753 A.D. when her husband Heikki thoughtlessly invited his entire Viking lodge home for dinner.



Smörgås means open sandwich. *Bord* means table. Precisely what *smörgås* go on your *bord* is determined by the imagination of whoever is preparing the *smörgåsbord.*

The Scandinavians have wonderful imaginations. The grilled, the poached, the smoked herring, trout, eel, and salmon; the black, brown, coarse and fine breads; the crackling fresh vegetables; the shell-fish raw, steamed and sauteed; the sausage sweet and spicy, hard and soft; the red and the black scoops of caviar; the cheeses mild to sharp to stinging; the icy Finlandia Vodka and wild berry liqueurs from beyond the Arctic Circle.

A hot and cold, sweet and pungent symphony of a buffet.



This is smörgåsbord, and it can be yours every day you spend in these lands of the midnight sun.

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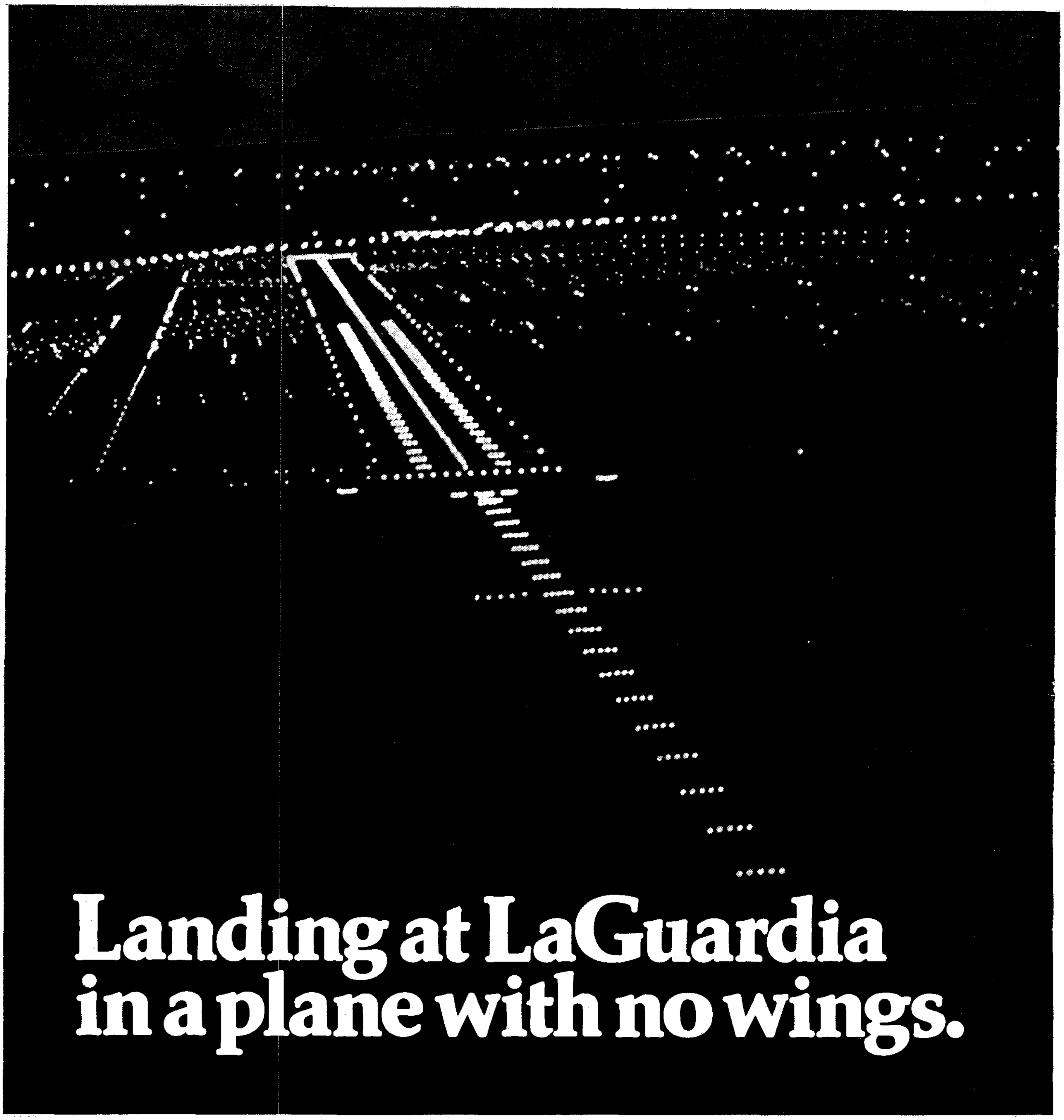

Landing at LaGuardia in a plane with no wings.

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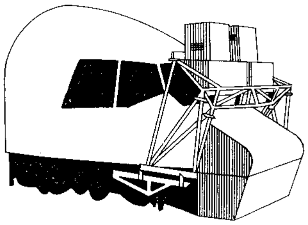

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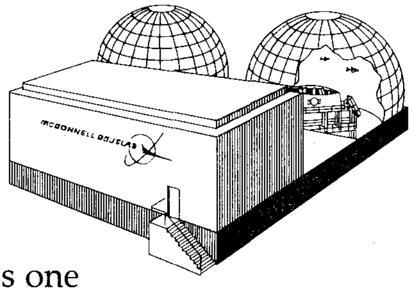

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gram, Rickles interrupts a question from Carson with an authentic conversation-stopper. "Your left eye is dancing!" he bellows, leaning forward and pointing a stubby finger. "That means you're self-conscious. Ever since you stopped drinking, your left eye dances." Even Carson is momentarily silenced. (I did not fully understand why until, at a subsequent meeting, Carson told me that there was one symptom by which he could infallibly recognize a guest who was on the brink of collapse, whether from fear, stimulants, or physical exhaustion. He called it "the dancing-eyeball syndrome." A famous example from the early nineteen-sixties: Peter O'Toole appeared on the show after forty-eight sleepless hours, spent filming and flying, and could not utter a coherent sentence. Carson ushered him offstage during the first commercial. "The moment he sat down, I could see his eyeballs were twitching," Carson said to me. "I recognized the syndrome at once. He was going to bomb.")

TESTIMONY of a Carson colleague:

My witness is Pat McCormick, who has been supplying Carson with material on and off for eighteen years and was a staff writer on the show from 1972 to 1977. Regarded as one of the most inventive gagmen in the business, he has also worked for Red Skelton, Danny Kaye, and others of note. McCormick, at forty-seven, is a burly, diffident man with hair of many colors: a reddish thatch on top, a gray mustache, and patches of various intermediate tints sprouting elsewhere on his head and face. Suitably resprayed, he might resemble a cross between Teddy Roosevelt and Zero Mostel. I have it on Ed McMahon's authority that McCormick takes the occasional drink, and that he once turned up at a script conference declaring, "I have lost my car, but I have tire marks on my hands." He gives me his account of a typical day on the "Tonight Show." "The writers—there are usually five of us—arrive at the studio around 9:30 A.M.," he says. "We've read the morning papers and the latest magazines. Once a week, we all get together for an ideas meeting, but most days we work separately, starting out with the monologue. I tend to specialize in fairly weird, uninhibited stuff. Johnny enjoys that kind of thing, and I just let it pour out. Like a line I came up with not long ago: 'If you want to clear your system out, sit on a piece of cheese and swallow a mouse.' Johnny finds his own ways of handling bum gags. When he's in a bad situation, I always wonder how the hell he'll get out of it, and he always surprises me."

Always? I remind McCormick of an occasion two days earlier, when a series of jokes had died like flies, and Carson had got a situation-saving laugh by remarking, "I now believe in reincarnation. Tonight's monologue is going to come back as a dog." That sounded to me like *echt* McCormick.

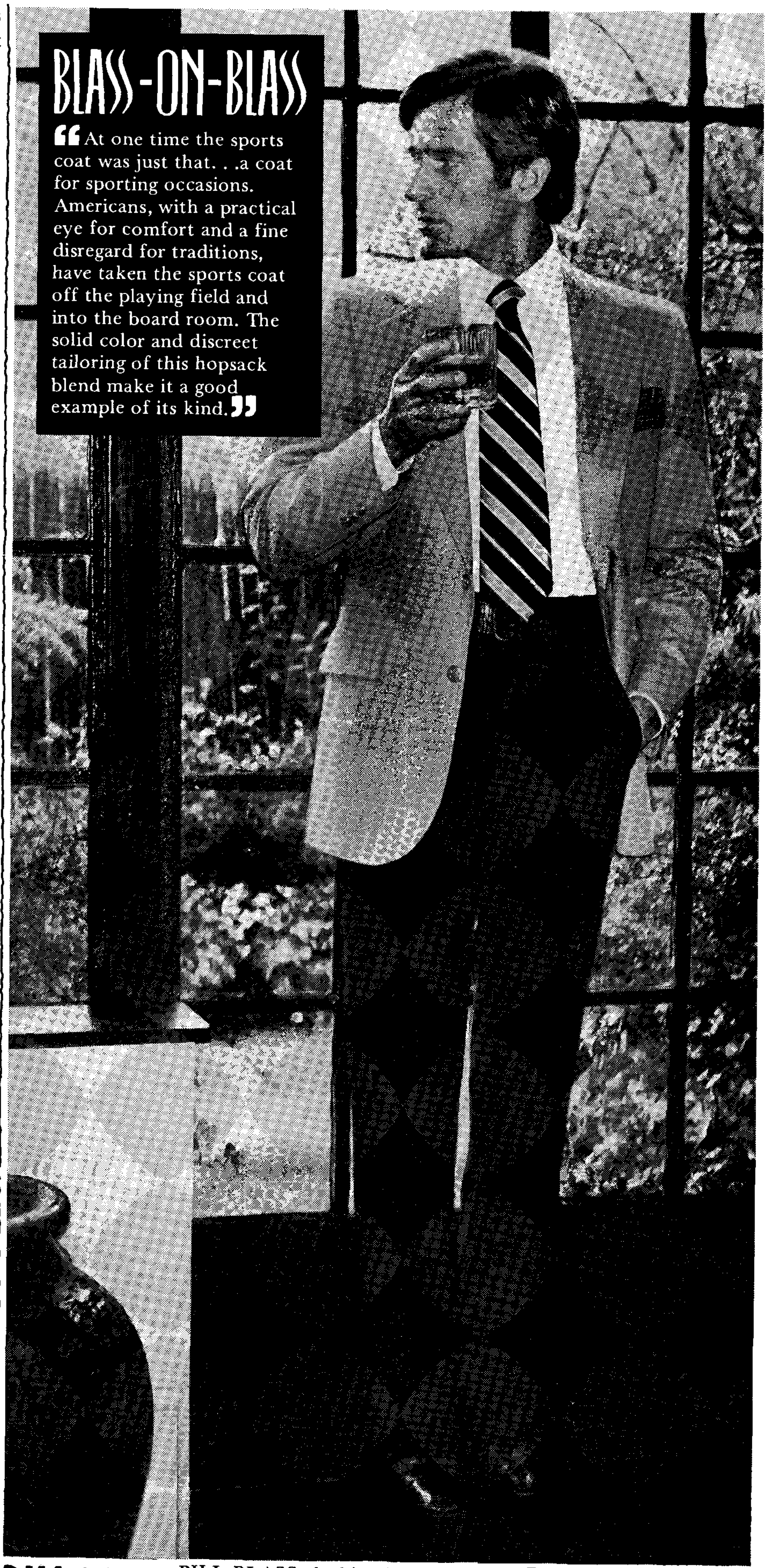
With a blush matching some of his hair, he admits to authorship of the line. He continues, "All the monologue material has to be on Johnny's desk by three o'clock. He makes the final selection himself. One of his rules is: Never tell three jokes running on the same subject. And, of course, he adds ideas of his own. He's a darned good comedy writer, you know."

One sometimes detects a vindictive glint in Carson's eye when a number of gags sink without risible trace, but McCormick assures me that this is all part of the act and causes no outbreaks of cold sweat among the writing team. "After the monologue," he goes on, "we work on the desk spot with Ed McMahon, which comes next in the show, or on sketches that need polishing, or on material for one of Johnny's characters."

Accustomed to thinking of Carson the host, we forget the range of Carson the actor-comedian. His current incarnations include the talkative crone Aunt Blabby (Whistler's mother on speed); the bungling turbanned clairvoyant named Carnac the Magnificent; Art Fern, described by McCormick as "the matinée-movie m.c. with patent-leather hair who'll sell *anything;*" and—a newer acquisition—Floyd Turbo, the man in the red shirt who speaks for the silent majority, rebutting liberal editorials with a vehemence perceptibly impaired by his inability to read from a TelePrompTer at more than dictation speed. Fans will recall Turbo's halting diatribe against the anti-gun lobby: "If God didn't want man to hunt, he wouldn't have given us plaid shirts. . . . I only kill in self-defense. What would *you* do if a rabbit pulled a knife on you? . . . Always remember: you can get more with a smile and a gun than you can with just a smile."

Everything for the evening's show must be rehearsed and ready for taping by five-thirty, apart from the central, imponderable element, on which all else depends: Carson's handling of the guests. Briefed by his aides, he knows the visitors' backgrounds, recent achievements, and immediate plans, and during the commercials he will listen to tactical suggestions from confreres like Fred de Cordova; but when the tape is running, he is the field commander, and his intuitions dictate the course of events. As he awaits his entrance cue, he is entitled to reflect, like Henry V on a more earthshaking occasion, "The day, my friends, and all things stay for me." McCormick, who now and then appears as a guest on the show, has this to say of Carson the interviewer: "He leans right in and goes with you, instead of leaning back and worrying about what the viewers are thinking. He never patronizes you or shows off at your expense. If you're getting a few pockets of laughter from the studio audience, he'll encourage you and feed you. He's an ideal straight man as well as a first-rate comedian, and that's a unique combination. Above all, there's a strand of his personality that is quite wild. He can do good bread-and-butter comedy any day of the week—like his Vegas routines or his banquet speeches—but he has this crazy streak that keeps coming through on the show, and when it does it's infectious. You feel anything could happen."

Example of Carson when the spirit of pure, eccentric play descends upon him and he obeys its bidding, wherever it may lead: During the monologue on May 11, 1977, he finds, as sometimes happens, that certain words are emerging from his mouth in slightly garbled form. He wrinkles his brow in mock alarm, shrugs, and presses on to the next sentence: "*Yetserday*, U.S. Steel announced . . ." He pauses, realizing what he has said, turns quizzically to McMahon, and observes, " 'Yesterday' is not a hard word to say." Facing the camera again, he goes on, "Yesterday—all my troubles seemed so far away . . ." Only now he is *singing*—singing, unaccompanied, the celebrated standard by John Lennon and Paul McCartney: "Now it looks as though they're here to stay. Oh, I believe in yesterday." By this time, the band, which was clearly taken by surprise, has begun to join in, at first raggedly but soon improvising a respectable accompaniment. Warming to his berserk task, Carson does not stop until he has reached the end of the chorus. He resumes the monologue: "Now, what was I talking about? Oh, yes. Yesterday . . ." But no sooner has the word passed his lips than Doc's combo, determined not to let him off the hook,



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strikes up the melody again. Undaunted, Carson plunges into the second chorus. Having completed it, he silences the musicians with a karate chop. There is loud applause, followed by an extended pause. Where can he go from here? Cautiously feeling his way, he continues, "*About twelve hours ago*, U.S. Steel announced . . ." And successfully finishes the gag. Everyone in the studio is laughing, not so much at the joke as at the sight of Carson on the wing. Grinning, he addresses McMahon.

CARSON: That's what makes this job what it is.
MCMAHON: What is it?
CARSON (*frowning, genuinely puzzled*): I don't know.

McCormick on Carson the private man: "Don't believe those iceberg stories. Once, when I was going through a bad divorce and feeling pretty low, I was eating alone in a restaurant and Johnny came in with a bunch of people. I'm not one of his intimate friends, but as soon as he saw me he left his guests and sat with me for more than half an hour, giving me all kinds of comfort and advice."

FURTHER notes of a Carson-watcher (random samplings from October and November, 1976):

Where other performers go home to relax after the show, Carson goes to the show to relax. The studio is his den, his living space—the equivalent in the show-business world of an exclusive salon in the world of literature. He instantly reacts to any untoward off-camera occurrence—a script inadvertently dropped, a guitar string accidentally plucked, a sneeze from a far corner of the room—as most of us would react to comparably abnormal events in the privacy of our homes. *Mutatis* very much *mutandis*, the show could be seen as a TV version of "The Conning Tower," Franklin P. Adams' famous column in the *Tribune*, which was launched in 1914 and consisted mainly of anecdotes, aphorisms, and verses contributed by F.P.A.'s friends and correspondents. "The Conning Tower," like the "Tonight Show," was a testing ground for new talents, and many of the people it introduced to the public went on to become celebrities.

October 1st: Traditional two-hour retrospective to mark the fourteenth anniversary of Carson's enthronement as NBC's emperor of causerie. Choice of material is limited to the period since 1970, for, with self-destructive improvidence, the company erased all the earlier Carson tapes, including Barbra Streisand's first appearance as his guest and Judy Garland's last. Host's debonair entry is hailed with fifty-second ovation, which sounds unforced. I note the digital mannerisms (befitting one who began his career as a conjurer) that he uses to hold our attention during his patter. The right index finger is particularly active, now stabbing downward as if pressing computer buttons, now rising to flick at his ear, to tickle or scratch one side of his nose: constantly in motion, never letting our eyes wander. Thus he stresses and punctuates the gags, backed always by Big Ed's antiphonal laughter.

Well-loved bits are rerun. The portly comic Dom DeLuise attempts a feat of legerdemain in which three eggs are at risk, and carries it off without breakage. But the sight of unbroken eggs—and others on standby—provokes Carson to a spell of riot. He tosses the original trio at DeLuise, who adroitly juggles with them and throws them back; Carson retaliates with more eggs, aiming a few at McMahon for good measure. Before long, in classic slapstick style, he has expressionlessly cracked an egg over DeLuise's head and dropped another inside the front of his trousers, smashing it as it falls with a kindly pat on the belly. "You're insane!" the victim cries. "You guys are bananas!" He gives Carson the same treatment; McMahon joins in; and by the end the floor and the three combatants are awash with what Falstaff would have called "pullet-sperm." Looking back on the clip, Carson puckishly observes, "There's something about eggs. I went ape." The whole impromptu outburst would not have been funny if it had been initiated by someone like Buddy Hackett; it worked because of its incongruity with Carson's persona—that of a well-nurtured Midwestern lad, playful but not vulgar. ("Even though he's over fifty," Fred de Cordova once said to me, "there's a Peck's Bad Boy quality that works for Johnny, never against him.")

Other oddities from the program's past: Carson diving onto a mattress from a height of twenty feet; splitting a block of wood with his head on instructions from a karate champion; tangling with a sumo wrestler; cuddling a cheetah cub; permitting a tarantula to crawl up his sleeve. We also see Carson confronted by guests with peculiar skills—the bird mimic whose big items are the mallard in distress and the cry of the loon, for instance, and the obsessive specialist whose act (one of the most memorable stunts ever recorded in a single take) consists of seven

Someone told her you may put off coming to the Orient for another year.

"Maybe next year we'll go to the Orient." How many years has it been since you first said that?

And every year since, it's been the same old story. Next year, never this year.

Kyoto's Golden Pavilion will still be there next year, of course. Hong Kong's harbor will still swarm with sampans and the sun will still rise over Bangkok's gilded temples.

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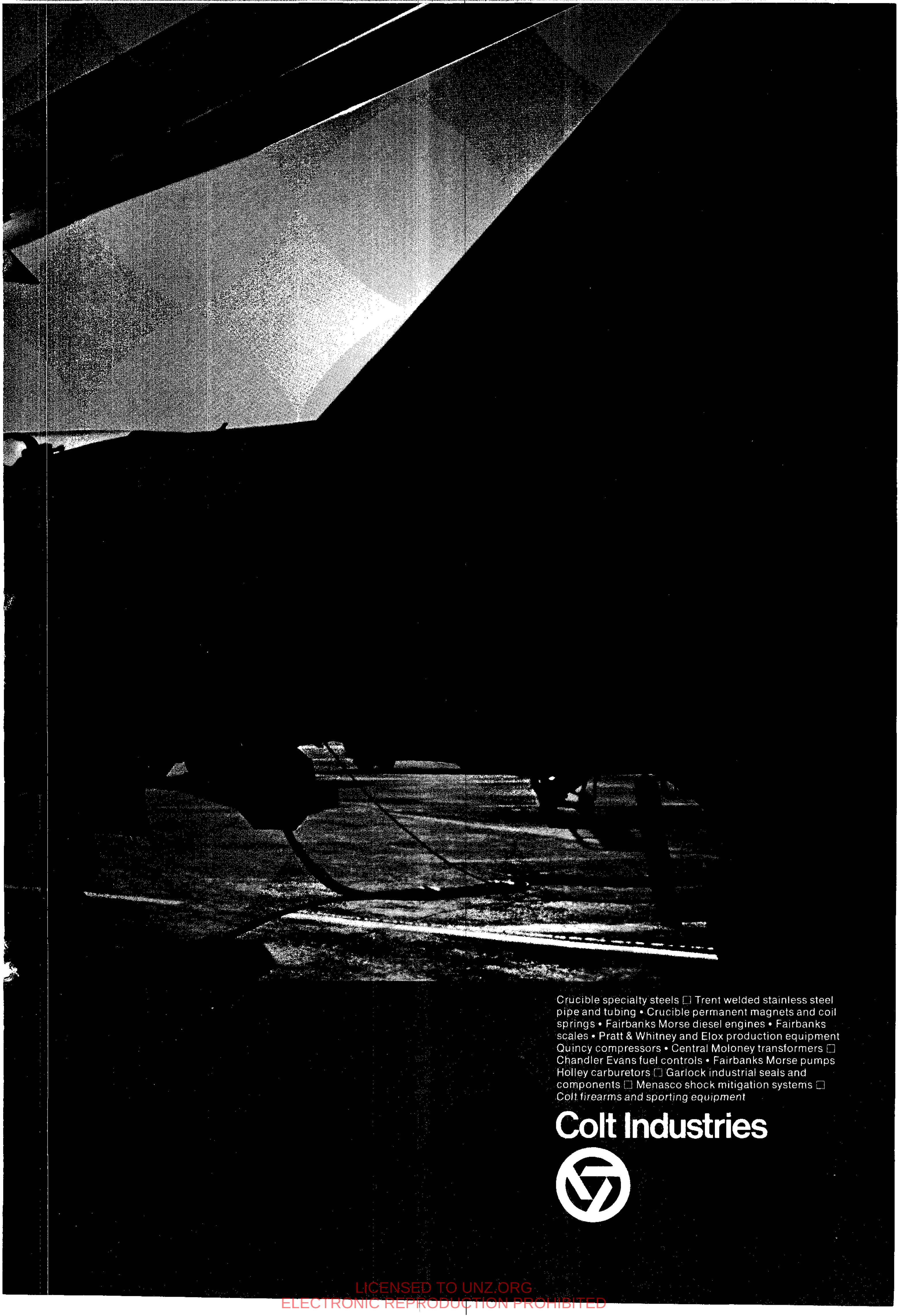

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thousand dominoes arranged on end in a convoluted, interwoven pattern, involving ramps and tunnels, so that the first, when it is pushed, sets off a chain reaction that fells the remaining six thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine, which spell out—among other things—the DNA symbol and Carson's name. In addition, we get the parody of “Dragnet,” that triumph of alliterative tongue-twisting in which Jack Webb, investigating the theft of a school bell, sombrely elicits from Carson the information that kleptomaniac Claude Cooper copped the clean copper clappers kept in the clothes closet. Best of all are the snippets from Carson's interviews with people aged ninety and upward, whom he addresses as exact equals, with care and without condescension, never patronizing them, and never afraid to laugh when they get a sentence back to front or forget the punch line of a joke; one such encounter is with a woman of a hundred and three years, who is still a licensed driver. (Paul Morrissey, the movie director, who is watching the program with me, remarks, “Nobody else on TV treats old people with the perfect tact and affection of Carson. He must have a very loving relationship with his parents.”) An NBC spokesman chips in with a resounding but meretricious statistic. The Carson show, he says, has already been seen by more than four times the population of our planet. This presumably means that one person who has watched the program a hundred times counts as a hundred people. Either that or NBC is laying claim to extraterrestrial viewers. The ratings war being what it is, anything is possible.

November 12th: After days of spot announcements and years of coaxing by the network, Frank Sinatra makes his début on the show. Received like visiting royalty, he gives the impression of swaggering even when seated. For once, the host seems uneasy, overawed, too ready to laugh. Don Rickles is hurried on unannounced to dissipate the atmosphere of obsequiousness, which he does by talking to the singer like Mafia subaltern reporting to Godfather; at least this is better than treating him as God. (I get memory flash of cable sent to me by Gore Vidal when he agreed to accept my younger daughter as godchild: “Always a godfather, never a god.” For many people in entertainment business, Sinatra is both.) When conversation again falters, Rickles declares to world at large, “I'm a Jew, and he's an Italian, and *here*”—he thrusts at Carson a face contorted with distaste, like diner finding insect in soup—“*here* we have . . . *what?*” Rickles wraps up interview by saying that he truly admires Sinatra, because “he stimulates excitement, he stimulates our industry, and”—fixing Carson with glare of malign relish—“*he . . . makes . . . you . . . nervous.*”

Not long afterward, Carson had his revenge. While acting as guest host on the show, Rickles broke the cigarette box on Carson's desk by striking it with his clenched fist when a gag fell flat. The next night, Carson returned. As soon as he sat down, he noticed the damage. “That's an heirloom,” he said. “I've had it for nine years.” Informed that Rickles was the culprit, he picked up the debris and rose, telling one of the cameras to follow him. (None of this was rehearsed.) He then left the “Tonight Show” studio, crossed the corridor outside, and, ignoring the red warning lights, marched into the studio opposite, where Rickles was at that moment halfway through taping the next episode of his comedy series “CPO Sharkey.” Walking straight into the middle of a shot, Carson held out his splintered treasure to Rickles and sternly demanded both restitution and an apology. The Enforcer was flabbergasted, as were his supporting cast, his producer, and his director. Carson was impenitent. “I really shook him,” he said to me later, with quiet satisfaction. “He was speechless.”

TESTIMONY from the two NBC associates who are closest to Carson:

These are Fred de Cordova and Ed McMahon. De Cordova, who has been Carson's producer for the past seven years, talks to me in the “Tonight Show” bungalow at Burbank. He is a large, looming, beaming man with horn-rimmed glasses, an Acapulcan tan, and an engulfing handshake that is a contract in itself, complete with small print and an option for renewal on both sides. Now in his mid-sixties, he looks like a cartoon of a West Coast producer in his early fifties. His professional record, dating back to 1933, is exceptional: Ten years in theatre with the Shubert organization, followed by a decade making movies in Hollywood. Thence into TV, where he worked (directing and/or producing) with Burns and Allen, George Gobel, Jack Benny, and the Smothers Brothers. In the magazine piece he wrote which appeared with notations by Carson, he

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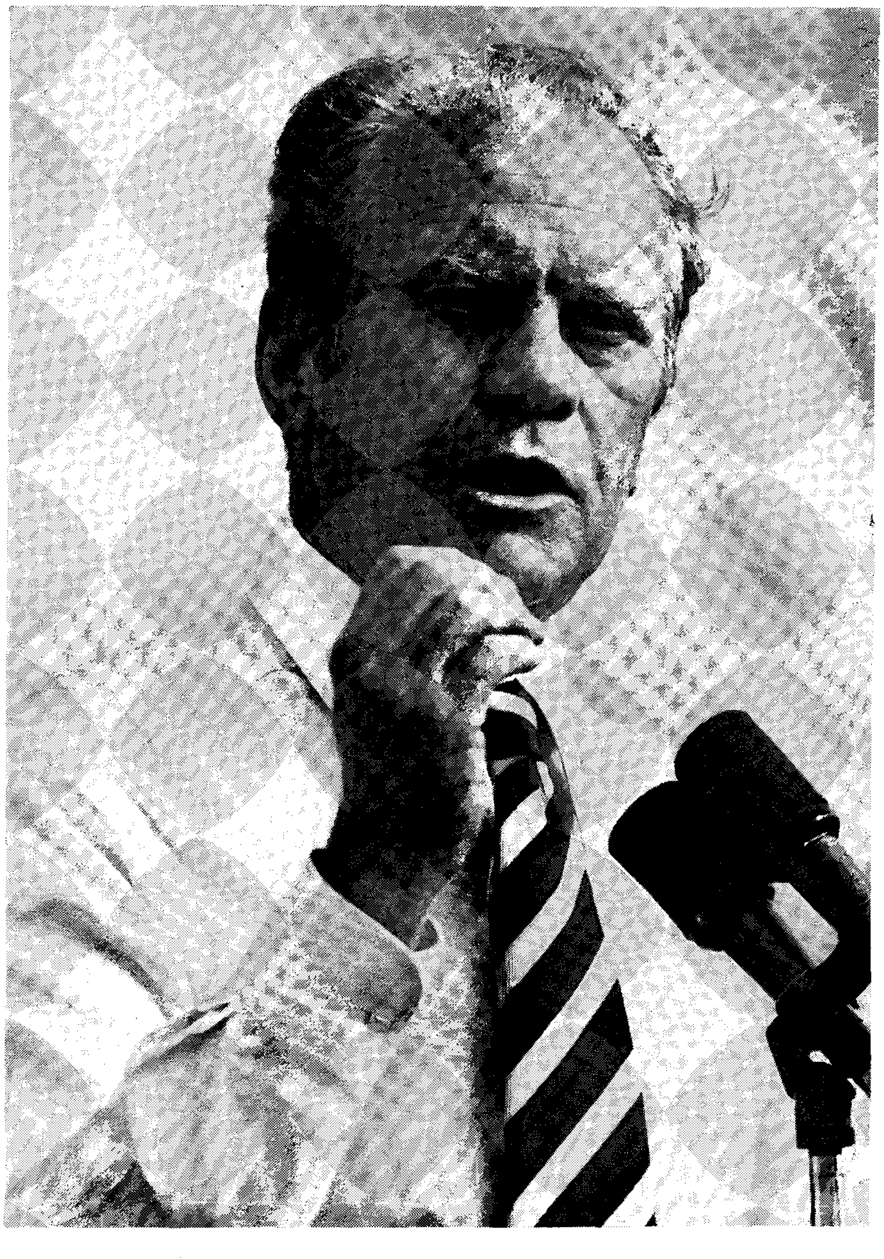

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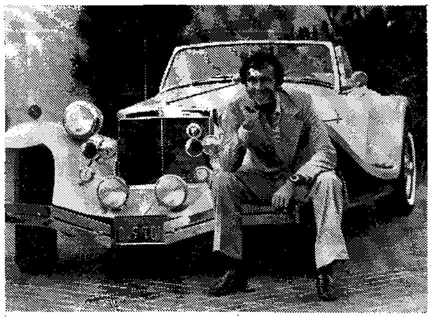

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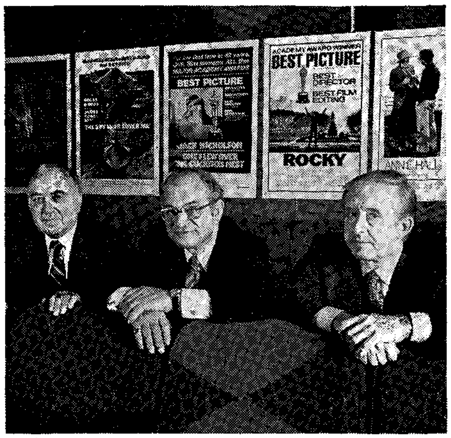
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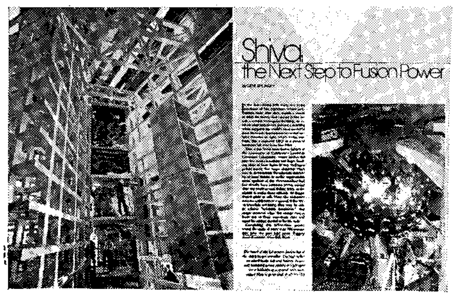
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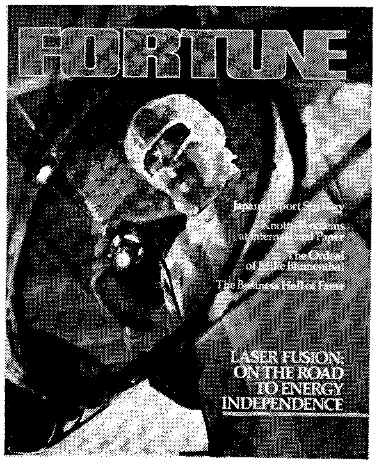
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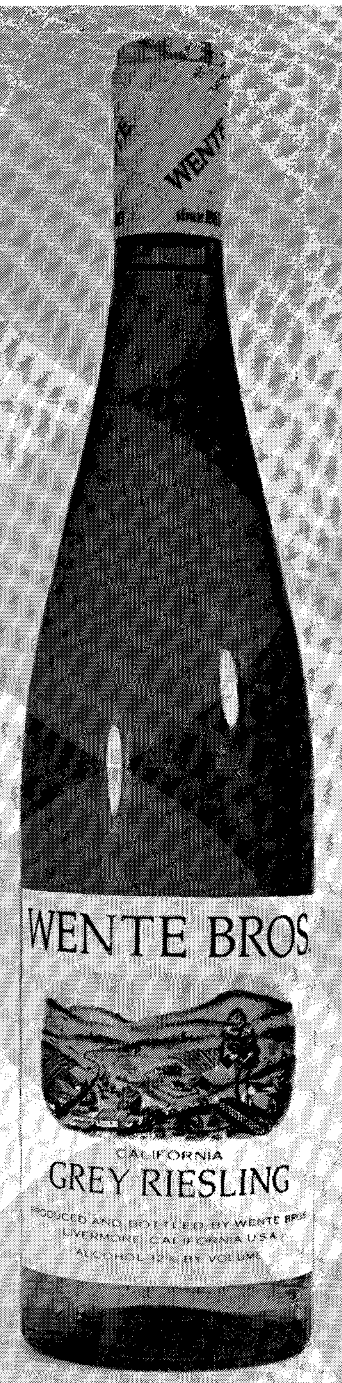

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said he now had "the last great job in show business," because the Carson program was "spontaneous" and "instantaneous." He explained that it wasn't technically live, in that taping preceded transmission; nevertheless, "practically speaking, we are the only continuing live show left." (For accuracy's sake, this phrase should be amended to read, "the only continuing nationwide nighttime quasi-live talk show left, apart from Merv Griffin's.") He went on to compare the program to a ballgame, played "in front of a jammed grandstand night after night." "To me," Carson noted in the margin, "it's like a salmon going up the Columbia River." Trying to define Carson's appeal, de Cordova wrote, "He's somebody's son, somebody's husband, somebody's father. He combines them all." Which sounds very impressive until you reflect that it applies to most of the adult male population. Carson circled this passage and made it slightly narrower in scope by adding to the first sentence, "and several people's ex-husband." De Cordova's most telling point, at which no one could cavil, came later in the article. "We have no laugh track," he said. "We're naked." In an age when canned hilarity has all but usurped the viewer's right to an autonomous sense of humor, it is reassuring to read a statement like that.

On the wall behind de Cordova's desk hangs a chart showing the lineup of guests for weeks, and even months, ahead. Perennial absentees, long sought, never snared, include Elton John and Robert Redford. When de Cordova is asked why the list is so sparsely dotted with people of much intellectual firepower, he reacts with bewilderment: "That just isn't true. We've had some of the finest minds I know—Carl Sagan, Paul Ehrlich, Margaret Mead, Gore Vidal, Shana Alexander, Madalyn Murray O'Hair." This odd aggregation of names sprang from the lips of many other "Tonight Show" employees to whom I put that question, almost as if they were contractually bound to commit it to memory. Nobody, however, denied that there have been few latter-day guests with the political weight of Nelson Rockefeller, Hubert Humphrey, and John and Robert Kennedy, all of whom appeared with Carson in his earlier years. De Cordova continues, "I've heard it said that Johnny is intimidated by witty, intellectual women. Well, just who *are* these women? Apart from people like Shana, who've had a lot of TV experience, they tend to freeze on camera. We've so often been fooled by witty cocktail talkers who simply didn't transfer to television." Carson, he points out, is no numbskull; he reads extensively, with special emphasis on politics, and has more than an amateur knowledge of astronomy. Also of sports: "Ilie Nastase, Chris Evert, and Dwight Stones have all been very effective guests." But there are, he admits, certain categories of people who are unlikely to receive the summons to Burbank: "We don't have an official blacklist, but Johnny wouldn't have Linda Lovelace on the show, for example. Or anyone mixed up in a sexual scandal, like Elizabeth Ray. And no criminals, except reformed criminals—we turned down Clifford Irving, the guy who forged the Howard Hughes memoirs. Johnny prefers to look for non-celebrities who'll make human-interest stories. We subscribe to fifty-seven newspapers from small towns and cities all over the country, and that's where we find some of our best material." He goes on to say, "In the monologue, Johnny will attack malfeasance, illiberal behavior, Constitutional abuses. But then compassion sets in. He was the first person to *stop* doing anti-Nixon jokes." (Ten years ago, Henry Morgan said of Carson, "He believes that justice is some kind of entity that is palpable. He talks about it as if he were talking about a chair.") Does the monologue suffer from network censorship? "The problem doesn't come up, because Johnny has an in-built sense of what his audience will take," de Cordova says. "He's the best self-editor I've ever known." This, as we shall see, was a somewhat disingenuous reply.

Lunch with the bulky, eternally clubbable McMahon in the Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel. Born in Detroit, Big Ed is now in his mid-fifties, and has worked with Carson for two decades, including five years as his announcer on "Who Do You Trust?" NBC gives him eight weeks' annual vacation with full pay, and he makes a great deal of money on the side from night-club appearances, real-estate investments, and commercials for a variety of products, chief among them beer and dog food. Even so, he is well aware that, as he says to me, "the 'Tonight Show' is my staple diet, my meat and potatoes—I'm realistic enough to know that everything else stems from that." In 1972, when the show moved from New York to Los Angeles, McMahon left his wife and four children, after twenty-seven years of marriage, to go with it. (Divorce followed soon afterward; McMahon remarried in 1976.) He has known his place, and kept to it without visible resentment, since 1965, when the notorious Incident of the Insect Repellent showed him exactly where he stood. "Johnny was demonstrating an anti-mosquito spray," he says, "and just before using it he said he'd heard that mosquitoes only went for really passionate people. Acting on instinct, I stuck out my arm and slapped it. It wrecked Johnny's gag, and I had to apologize to him during the next break. That taught me never to go where he's going. I have to get my comedy in other areas. Before the show, I do the audience warmup, and even there I have to avoid any topical material he might be using in the monologue."

This being a show day, McMahon eats and drinks frugally (cold cuts and beer). Both he and Carson have drastically reduced their alcoholic intake over the past few years. On camera, Carson sips coffee and cream (no sugar), and McMahon makes do with iced tea. McMahon denies the rumor that Carson has become anti-social because of his abstinence: "If it's a big affair, you'll maybe find him in a corner, talking one to one, but in a small group he can be the life of the party, doing tricks, killing everybody." One of the unauthorized biographies of Carson contains a story about a surprise birthday party to which his second wife, Joanne, invited all his close friends. "There were about eight people there," an unnamed guest is quoted as saying, "and I think it was a shock to all of us." Pooh-poohing this yarn, McMahon counters by telling me about a surprise party he gave for Carson in 1962: "I built it up by pretending it was being held in his honor by *TV Guide* and he really had to go. He finally gave in. I said I'd drive him down there, and he began bitching as soon as he got in the car. So I suggested stopping off at my place for a preliminary drink, and he agreed. I'd arranged for the other cars to be parked out of sight, in case he recognized them. What happened was that he walked straight into the arms of about fifty friends and relatives who'd come from all over to see him. He had tears in his eyes. That was the first time I saw him touched."

Professionally, McMahon most enjoys the tête-à-tête at Carson's desk which follows the monologue: "Sometimes he develops a real resistance to

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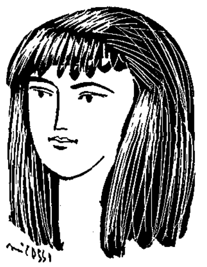
bringing out the first guest. I see something goofy in his eyes. It means that he wants us to go on rapping together, so we play back and forth, getting wilder and wilder, until maybe the guest has gone home and it's time for the first commercial."

I read to him some remarks made by the columnist Rex Reed, who described Carson as "the most over-rated amateur since Evelyn and her magic violin" and continued, "The most annoying thing about Carson is his unwillingness to swing, to trust himself or his guests. . . . He never looks at you; he's too busy (1) watching the audience to see if they are responding, and (2) searching the face of his producer for reassurance."

McMahon finds these comments inexplicable. "Johnny can get absolutely spellbound by his guests," he says. "You'll see him lean his chin on his hand and really drink them in. And as for that stuff about not swinging—did the guy ever watch him with Tony Randall or Buck Henry or Orson Bean? He's always going off into unplanned areas and uncharted places. Other people have clipboards full of questions and use them like crutches. Johnny never uses any. And he loves meeting new comics and feeding them lines, the way he did with Steve Martin and Rodney Dangerfield when hardly anyone had heard of them. Naturally, he likes to get laughs himself. That's part of the job. A few nights ago, Tony Bennett was on the show, talking about his childhood and how his family hoped he'd achieve fabulous things when he grew up. Johnny listened for a long while and then said, quite deadpan, 'My parents wanted me to be a sniper.' Another time, he asked Fernando Lamas why he'd gone into movies, and Lamas said, 'Because it was a great way to meet broads.' I loved Johnny's comeback. He just nodded and said, 'Nietzsche couldn't have put it more succinctly.' And, of course, there are the famous ad-libs that everyone remembers, like when Mr. Universe was telling him how important it was to keep fit—'Don't forget, Mr. Carson, your body is the only home you'll ever have'—and Johnny said, 'Yes, my home *is* pretty messy. But I have a woman who comes in once a week.' " McMahon confirms my impression that Carson was daunted by Sinatra. He adds, "And he's always a little bit overawed by Orson Welles. But there was one time when we were both nervous. I came on as a guest to plug a film I'd just made, and we had a rather edgy conversation. When the interview was over, Johnny came out from behind his desk to shake hands and revealed to the world that he had no pants on. I was so anxious to get off that I didn't even notice." How long, I ask, will Carson stay with the show? "He'll still be there in 1980," says McMahon confidently.



THE year 1977, for Carson-watchers, was one in which the "Tonight Show," while retaining all its sparkle and caprice, gained not an inch in intellectual stature. It is one thing to say, as Carson often does, that he is not a professional controversialist. It is quite another to avoid controversy altogether.

February 2nd: Appearance of Alex Haley to talk about "Roots." (During the previous night's monologue, Carson used a curiously barbed phrase to account for the success of ABC's televised adaptation of Haley's best-seller. "Give the people what they want," he said. "Hatred, violence, and sex." It was difficult to tell whether the gibe was aimed at the rival network or at the book itself. One wondered, too, why he thought it amusing to add, "My great-great-great-great-grandfather was a runaway comedian from Bangladesh.") In 1967, when Haley was working for *Playboy*, he conducted a lengthy interview with Carson. In the course of it, Carson attacked the C.I.A. for hiring students to compile secret reports on campus subversives, condemned "the kind of corporate espionage and financial hanky-panky that goes on in business," supported the newly insurgent blacks in demanding "equality for all," and said, "It's ludicrous to declare that it's wrong to have sex with anyone you're not married to." Moreover, he summed up the war in Vietnam as "stupid and pointless." He seldom voiced these opinions with much vehemence on the show. Ten years later, with the war safely over, he welcomed Jane Fonda as his guest and congratulated her on having lived to see her views on Vietnam fully justified by history. With considerable tact, Ms. Fonda not only resisted the temptation to address her host as Johnny-come-lately but refrained from reminding him that when she most needed a television outlet for her ideas the doors of the "Tonight Show" studio were closed to her.

To return to February 2nd: Haley takes the initiative by asking Carson how far back he can trace his own roots. He replies that he knows who his grandparents were, and was personally very close to his father's parents, both of whom survived into their nineties. Of his pedigree before that, he confesses total ignorance. Haley thereupon shakes him by producing a heavy, leather-bound volume with a golden inscription on the cover: "Roots of Johnny Carson—A Tribute to a Great American Entertainer." Haley has signed the flyleaf, "With warm best wishes to you and your family from the family of Kunta Kinte." Carson is obviously stirred. "I was tremendously moved that Alex had found time to do all this research in the middle of his success," he said to me afterward, and I learned from McMahon that this was only the second occasion on which he had seen the boss tearful. Although Haley was the instigator, the work was in fact carried out by the Institute of Family Research, in Salt Lake City. The people there first heard of the project on the evening of Saturday, January 29th, when Haley called them up and told them that the finished book had to be ready for presentation to Carson in Los Angeles the following Wednesday. "That gave us two working days to do a job that would normally take us two months," a spokesman for the Institute told me. "What's more, we had to do it in absolute secrecy, without any access to the person involved." A task force of fifteen investigators toiling round the clock for forty-eight hours just managed to beat the deadline. The result of their labors—consisting of genealogical charts going back to the sixteenth century, biographical sketches of Carson's more prominent forebears, and anecdotes from the family's history—ran to more than four hundred pages. The gesture cost Haley (or his publishers) approximately five thousand dollars. Carson lent me the book, a massive quarry of data, from which I offer a few chippings:

(1) Earliest known Carson ancestor: Thomas Kellogg, on the paternal side of the family, born c. 1521 in the English village of Debdon, Essex. The first Kelloggs to cross the Atlantic were Daniel (born 1630) and his wife, Bridget, who settled in Connecticut. By the early nineteenth century, we find offshoots of the clan widely dispersed in Indiana and Nebraska, and it was Emiline, of the Nebraska Kelloggs, who married Marshall Carson, great-grandfather of Johnny. Marshall (born

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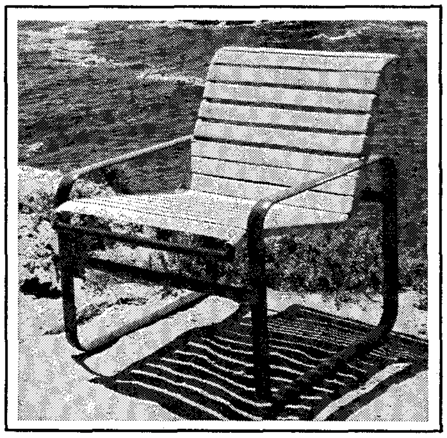

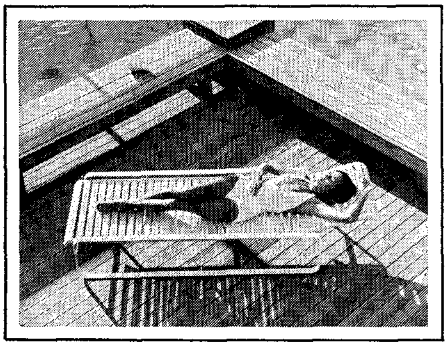

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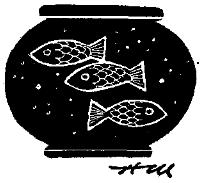
c. 1833) was allured by gold, and staked a profitless claim in the western part of Nebraska. Along with Emiline, he moved to Iowa, where by dying in 1922 he narrowly failed to become a nonagenarian. That was the year in which his grandson Homer Loyd Carson married a girl named Ruth Hook. John William Carson (born 1925) was the second child of this union, flanked by an elder sister, Catherine, and a younger brother, Dick.

(2) On his mother's side, Carson's first authenticated forebear is Thomas Hooke, a seventh great-grandfather, who sailed from London to Maryland in 1668. Most of his maternal roots, however, lead back to Ireland, whence two of his fifth great-grandfathers embarked for the States in the middle years of the eighteenth century.

(3) His family tree is laden with hardworking farmers. Decennial census sheets from 1840 to 1900 show Carson progenitors tilling the land in Maine, Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska, and Iowa.

(4) As far as anyone knows, Johnny and Kit Carson are no more closely related than Edward and Bonwit Teller. Johnny's background nonetheless contains two figures of some regional celebrity. One is Captain James Hook (maternal branch), who is reputed, but not proved, to have served with Washington at Valley Forge. In a private quarrel, Captain Hook lost a sliver of his ear to a man who pulled a knife on him. Being unarmed, Hook riposted by *tearing off a much larger* piece of his assailant's ear with his teeth. The other Carson ancestor of note is Judge James Hardy (paternal branch), a whimsical but beloved dispenser of justice in mid-nineteenth-century Iowa.



(5) Judge Hardy's son Samuel, who died in 1933, at the age of eighty-five, was a skilled amateur violinist. Otherwise, in all the four previous centuries of the Carson family saga there is no sign of anyone with an interest in the arts or a talent for entertainment.

February 10th: Significant how many of the failed gags in Carson's monologues miss their target because they are based on the naïve assumption that the studio audience has read the morning papers. One often gets the feeling that Carson is doubly insulated against reality. Events in the world outside Burbank and Bel Air impinge on him only when they have been filtered through magazines and newspapers and then subjected to a second screening by his writers and researchers. Hence his uncanny detachment, as of a man sequestered from the everyday problems with which most of us grapple. In fifteen years, barely a ripple of emotional commitment has disturbed the fishpond smoothness of his professional style. We are watching an immaculate machine. Some find the spectacle inhuman. "He looks plastic," said Dorothy Parker in 1966. On the other hand, Shana Alexander told me with genuine admiration, "He's like an astronaut, a Venusian, a visitor from another planet, someone out of 'Star Trek.' "

Two reflections on tonight's monologue. First, drawing on the latest Nielsen report, Carson informs us that during the icebound month of January the average American family watched television for seven hours and sixteen minutes per day. A fearsome statistic. No wonder they have so little time for newspapers. Second, he knocks the Senate for allowing its members' salaries to be raised to fifty-seven thousand five hundred dollars a year. The joke gives off a whiff of bad taste, coming, as it does, from a man who earns more than that every week. Whatever Carson's failings may be, they do not include a lack of chutzpah.

April 1st: Nice to hear Ethel Merman on the show, blasting out "Ridin' High" as if calling the cattle home across the sands of D flat major. But I wonder whether Carson would (or could) have done what Merv Griffin, of all people, did earlier in the evening; namely, devoted most of a ninety-minute program to a conversation with Orson Welles, which was conducted on what by talk-show standards was a respectably serious level. In 1962, when Carson took over the stewardship of the "Tonight Show," America was about to enter one of the grimmest and most divisive periods in its history, marked by the assassinations of the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King, the ghetto insurrections, the campus riots, the Vietnam war. Is it arguable that during this bad time Carson became the nation's chosen joker because, in Madison Avenue terms, he was guaranteed to relieve nervous strain and anxiety more swiftly and safely (ask your doctor) than any competing brand of wag? Now that the country's headaches have ceased to throb so painfully, its viewers may be ready for a more substantial diet than any that Carson, at the moment, cares to provide.

April 7th: Characteristic but in no way exceptional duologue between Car-

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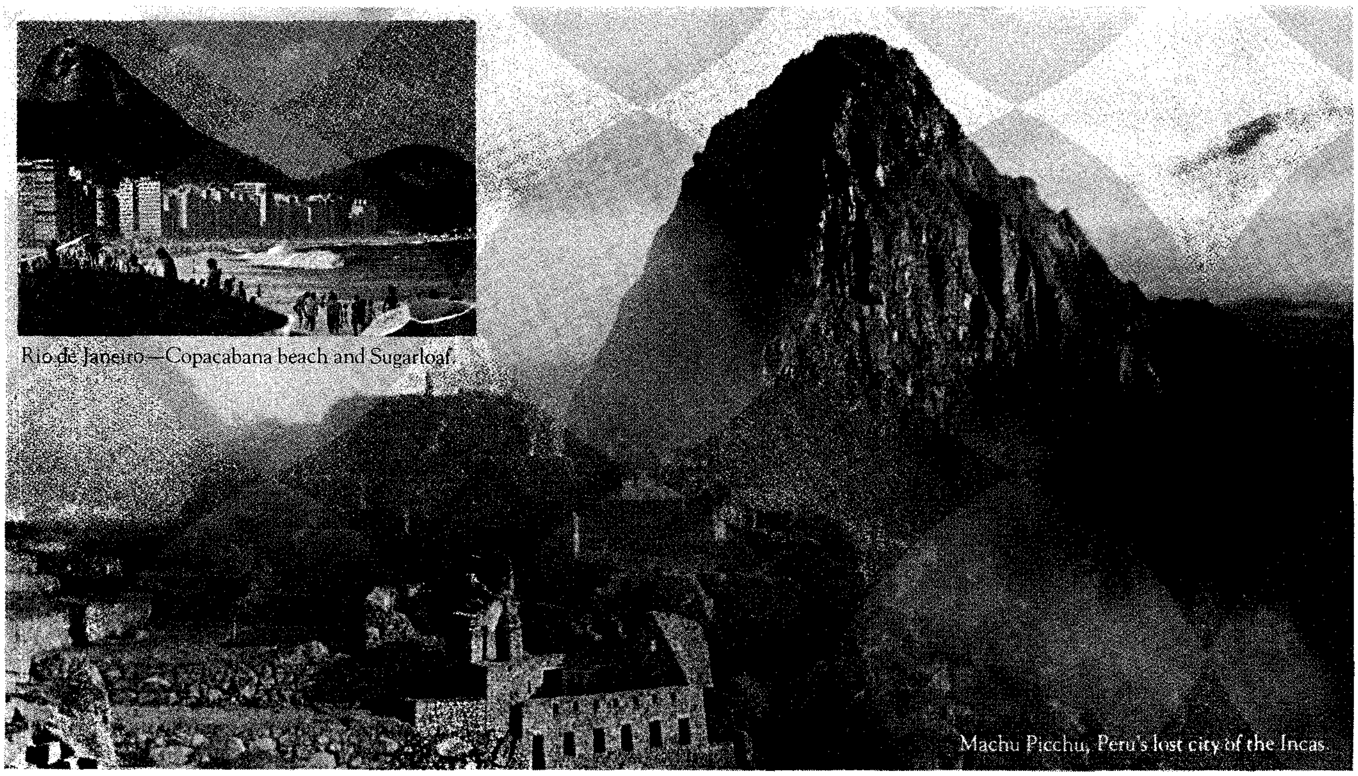

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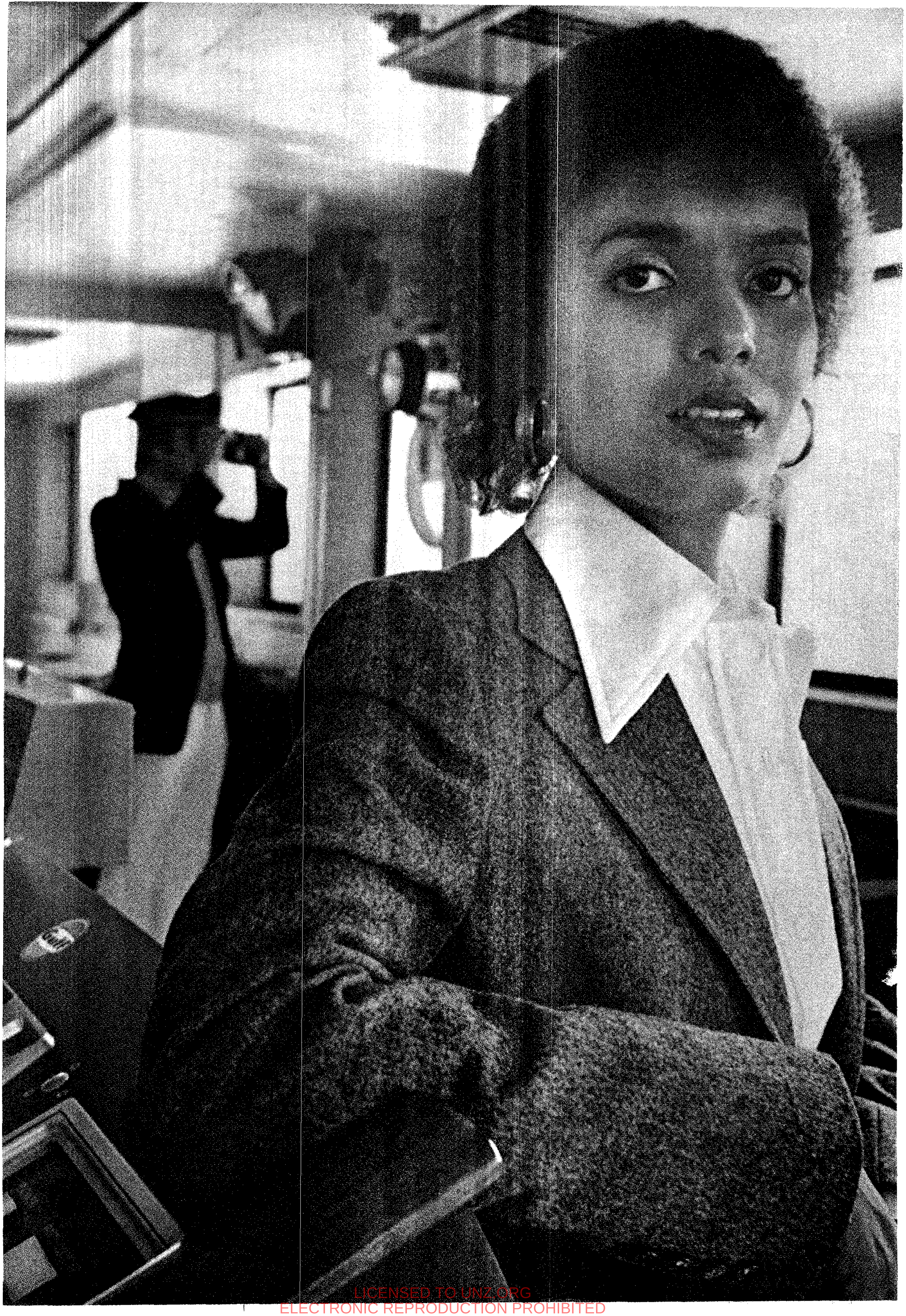

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Adrian does whatever it takes to get the oil transported from where it is to where it's needed.

Whatever it takes

Adrian does whatever it takes to get the oil transported from where it is to where it's needed. Sometimes she has to charter a tanker. Other times she may trade the use of one of Gulf's ships to another oil company, to gain the use of the other company's ship if it happens to be right where she needs it. (In her work, that's called tonnage exchange.)

Monsoons and straits

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Adrian Mills. One of 52,000 Gulf people, meeting the challenge.

Gulf

Gulf people: meeting the challenge.

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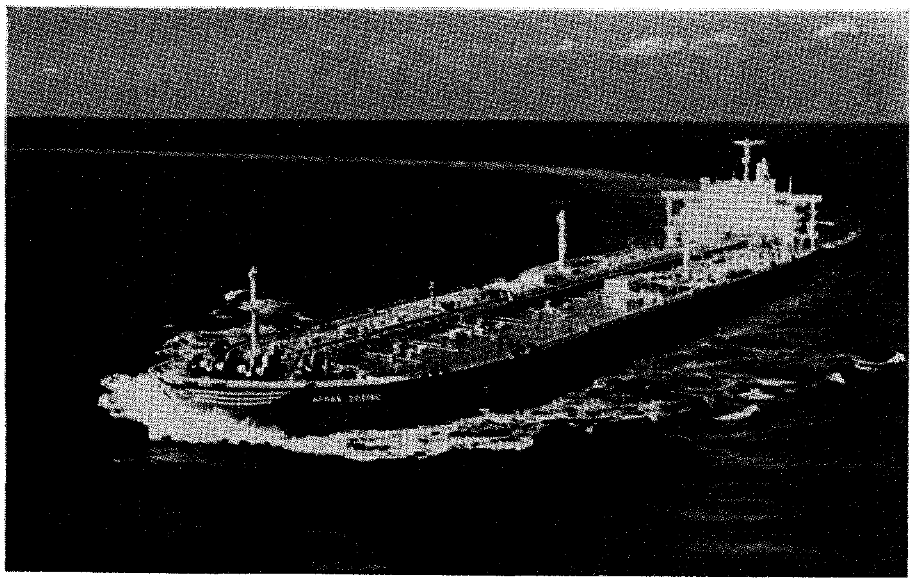

This is one of the 21 ships Adrian is in charge of: the 228,000-ton *Afran Zodiac.*

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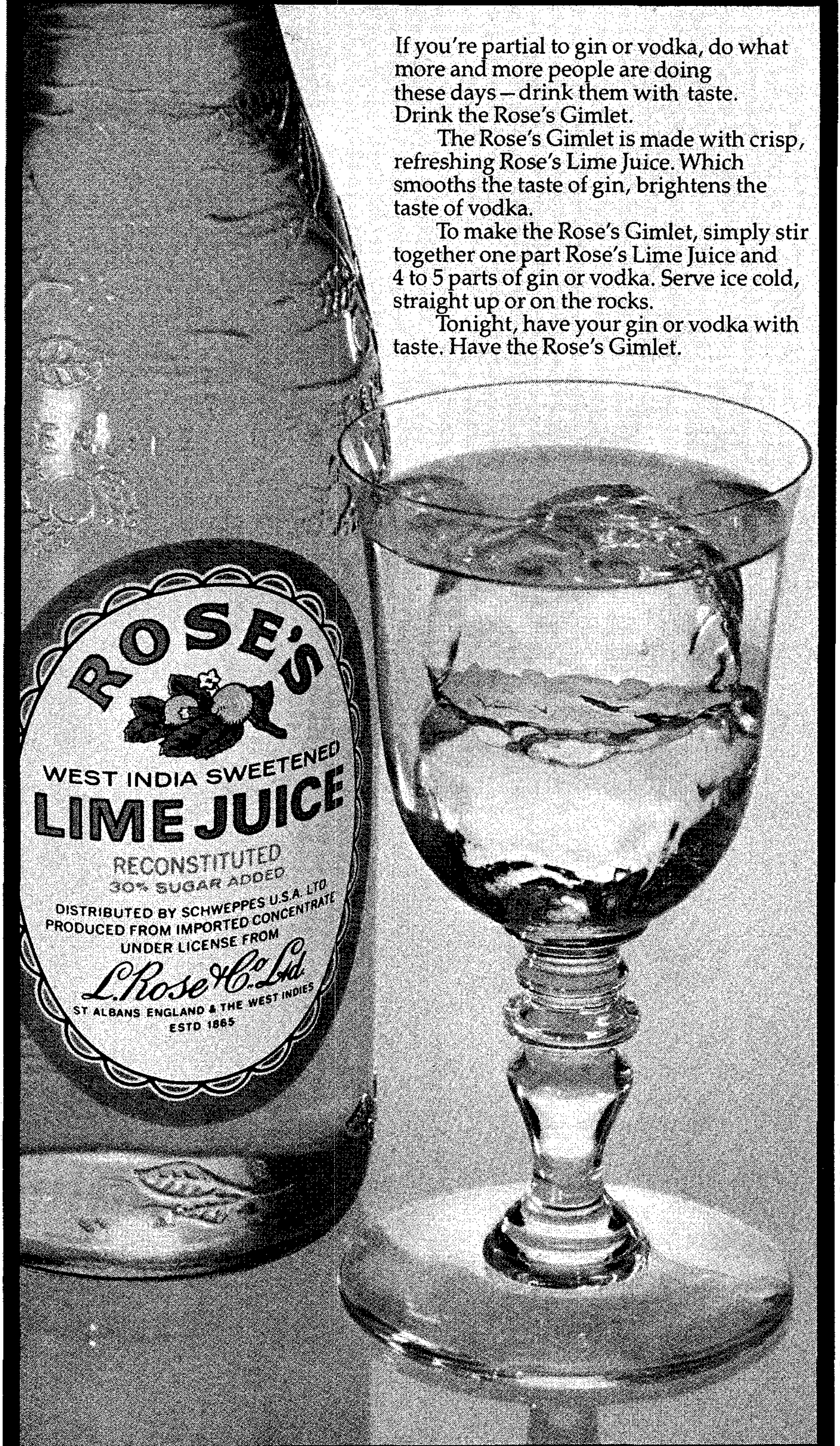

ROSE'S. FOR DRINKS WITH TASTE.

son and Buck Henry, the screenwriter and occasional actor. Whenever they meet on the show, their exchanges are vagrant, ethereal, unhurried, as if they were conversing in a limbo borrowed from a play by Samuel Beckett.

CARSON: Do you believe in plastic surgery?
HENRY: Absolutely. It's important, I think, to move things about judiciously.
CARSON: They're talking about freezing people and then reviving them in hundreds of years' time.
HENRY (*nods for a while, until a thought strikes him*): But suppose you died of freezing to death? (*Pause.*) I think it would be frightening to come back.
CARSON: If you could come back as somebody else, who would it be?
HENRY (*unhesitatingly*): Miss Teen-Age America.
CARSON: Where do you get ideas for your work?
HENRY: Oh, everyday places. Looking through keyholes.
CARSON: Eugene O'Neill got his ideas from his family.
HENRY: I expect to get a short monograph out of mine. (*Pause.*)
CARSON: You have a strange turn of mind.

Carson brings up a newspaper story about a California woman who was recently interred, in accordance with a clause in her will, at the wheel of her Ferrari.

HENRY: Yes. It's reasonable to be married—or I may mean buried—in a Ferrari.
CARSON: How do you want to go?
HENRY (*very slowly*): Very slowly. With a jazz band playing in the background. I want to be extremely old. I want to be withered beyond recall.
CARSON: But if you lived to be a hundred and fifty, how would you kill time for the last seventy years?
HENRY (*contemplatively*): You'd read a lot. I don't know what the real fun things to do would be after a hundred and twenty. I think the normal activities that come to mind would probably cripple you.

There was also some adagio talk about quarks and their relationship to other subatomic particles, but Henry declined to expand on the subject, perhaps feeling that it might be over our heads.

May 11th: Advice from Carson on longevity: "If you must smoke, don't do it orally." And, more cryptically: "You can add years to your life by wearing your pants backwards."

June 15th: He chats with someone who has attained longevity. Clare Ritter, an impoverished widow from Florida in her late seventies, discloses that her life's ambition is to make a trip to Egypt. In order to achieve it, she sells waste aluminum, which she collects by ransacking garbage cans.

CARSON: How much is this trip going to cost?
MRS. RITTER: Three thousand dollars.
CARSON: And how much have you saved so far?
MRS. RITTER: About half of it.

Carson volunteers to give her the rest himself. A graceful (and, I am assured, unpremeditated) gesture.

July 19th: Seated at the desk with McMahon, Carson says, "If you decide to ban your kids from watching TV, here's what they can do instead." He picks up a sheaf of humorous suggestions submitted by his writers, scans the first page, shows by his reaction that he finds it unfunny, and drops it on the floor. (This, like what ensues, is unplanned and impromptu.) He inspects page 2, raises his eyebrows, shows it to McMahon, drops *that* on the floor; goes on to page 3, gives McMahon a glimpse of it, whereupon both men shake their heads, and it, too, ends up on the floor. At this point, Carson starts to chuckle to himself. "How about *this*?" he says, and page 4 is tossed away, to be joined in rapid succession by a dozen, by *two* dozen more pages, falling faster and faster (the chuckle is by now uncontrollable), in a blizzard of rejection that does not stop until he has discarded every sheet of what was obviously planned as a solid five-minute comedy routine. On network TV, this is just not done. You do not throw away an expensive script in full view of a national audience unless you can ad-lib something funnier to take its place. Carson offers us nothing in exchange except what he alone can supply: the spectacle of Carson being Carson, acting on impulse, surrendering to whim, and, as ever, getting away with it. (No claim is made for the above escapade as archive material, or as anything more than a specimen of Carson in average form on an average night. I record it to illustrate how, in the right hands, pure behavior becomes pure television. Like Shakespeare's Parolles, Carson can say, "Simply the thing I am shall make me live.")

Later in this show, Albert Finney, an actor who has temporarily turned his hand to lyric-writing and his voice to singing, plugs his first L.P., declaring with brooding self-satisfaction that his songs derive from "the spring well" of personal experience. The number with which he favors us constitutes more of a threat to English grammar ("What has become of you and I?") than to Charles Aznavour, who seems to be Finney's model. The last guest is Madeline Kahn, who discusses the psychological ups and downs of her career as an actress. Carson responds with a rare flash of self-revelation. "I've had a little therapy myself," he says, "to cut down the hills and get out of the valleys."

August 4th: President Carter has recommended that it should not be a criminal offense to be found in possession of an ounce or less of marijuana.

CARSON: The trouble is that nobody in our band knows what an ounce or less means.
DOC SEVERINSEN: It means you're about out.

JANUARY 18, 1977: My first solo encounter with Carson. We are to meet at the Beverly Hills Hotel for an early luncheon in the Polo Lounge. I prepare for my date by looking back on Carson's pre-"Tonight Show" career. It is not a story of overnight success. At the time of his birth in Corning, Iowa, his father was a lineman for an electricity company. It was a peripatetic job, and the family moved with him through several other Iowa hamlets. When Johnny was eight, they settled in Norfolk, Nebraska, a town of some ten thousand, where Carson senior got a managerial post with the local light-and-power company. "When one meets Johnny's parents, one understands him," Al Capp has said. "They're almost the definitive Nebraska mother and father. Radiantly decent, well-spoken. The kind that raised their kids to have manners. Of all the television hosts I've faced, Carson has the most old-fashioned manners." By contemporary standards, he had a strict—even rigorous—upbringing, not calculated to encourage extrovert behavior. His brother Dick (now director of the "Merv Griffin Show") was once quoted as saying, "Put it this way—we're not Italian. Nobody in our family ever says what they really think or feel to anyone else." Except, I would add, in moments of professional crisis, when Johnny Carson can express himself with brusque and unequivocal directness. In 1966, for instance, the first three nights of a cabaret engagement he played in Miami were spoiled by a backstage staff too inexperienced to handle the elaborate sound effects that his act required. Carson accused his manager, Al Bruno, who had looked after his business affairs for almost ten years, of responsibility for the fiasco, and fired him on the spot. Again, there was the case of

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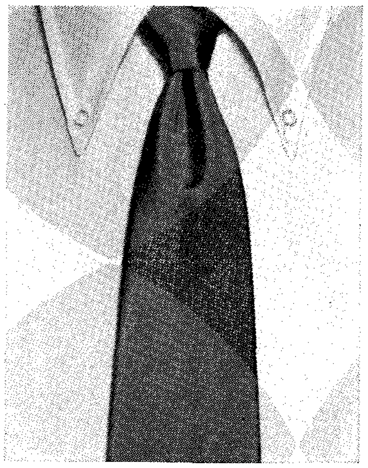

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Art Stark, who described himself to an interviewer in 1966 as "Johnny's best friend." He had every reason to think so: for nearly a decade he had been Carson's producer, first on "Who Do You Trust?" and then on the "Tonight Show." He was the star's closest confidant, and when, in 1967, Carson embarked on a legal struggle with NBC for control of the show, including the right to hire and fire, he repeatedly assured Stark that, whatever the outcome, Stark's job would be safe. Having won the battle, however, Carson summoned Stark to his apartment and announced without preamble that he wanted another producer, unconnected with NBC. Dumbfounded, Stark asked when he would have to quit. "Right now," said Carson.

When Carson was twelve, he picked up, at a friend's house, a conjuring manual for beginners called "Hoffman's Book of Magic." Its effect on him has been compared to the impact on the youthful Keats of Chapman's Homer. ("Chapman hit it in the bottom of the ninth to tie the game against Milwaukee," said the man who made the comparison, a former Carson writer. "Little Johnny Keats was standing behind the center-field fence and the ball landed smack on his head.") Carson immediately wrote off for a junior magician's kit. He worked hard to master the basic skills of the trade, and, having tried out his tricks on his mother's bridge club, he made his professional début, billed as The Great Carsoni, before a gathering of Norfolk Rotarians. For this he received three dollars—the first of many such fees, for the kid illusionist was soon in demand at a variety of local functions, from firemen's picnics to county fairs. As a student at Norfolk High, he branched out into acting and also wrote a comic column for the school newspaper.

Digressive flash forward: In 1976, Carson was invited back to Norfolk to give the commencement address. Immensely gratified, he accepted at once. He took great pains over his speech, and when he delivered it, on May 23rd, the school auditorium was packed to the roof. In the front row, alongside his wife, brother, and sister, sat his parents, to whom he paid tribute for having "backed me up and let me go in my own direction." He also thanked one of his teachers, Miss Jenny Walker, who had prophetically said of him in 1943, "You have a fine sense of humor and I think you will go far in the entertainment world." In case anyone wondered why he had returned to Norfolk, he explained, "I've come to find out

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what's on the seniors' minds and, more important, to see if they've changed the movie at the Granada Theatre" (where, I have since discovered, Carson was working as a part-time usher when the manager interrupted the double feature to announce that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor). He went on to recall that he had been chosen to lead the school's scrap-metal drive: "Unfortunately, in our zeal to help the war effort, we sometimes appropriated metal and brass from people who did not know they were parting with it." He continued, "I was also a member of the Thespians. I joined because I thought it meant something else. Then I found out it had to do with acting." In the manner expected of commencement speakers, he offered a little advice on coping with life in the adult world. Though his precepts were homespun to the point of platitude, they were transparently sincere and devoid of conventional pomposity. The main tenets of the Carson credo were these: (1) Learn to laugh at yourself. (2) Never lose the curiosity of childhood: "Go on asking questions about the nature of things and how they work, and don't stop until you get the answers." (3) Study the art of compromise, which implies a willingness to be convinced by other people's arguments: "Stay loose. In marriage, above all, compromise is the name of the game. Although"—and here he cast a glance at his third wife—"you may think that my giving advice on marriage is like the captain of the Titanic giving lessons on navigation." (4) Having picked a profession, feel no compulsion to stick to it: "If you don't like it, stop doing it. Never continue in a job you don't enjoy." (On the evidence, it would be hard to fault Carson for failing to practice what he preached.) A question-and-answer session then took place, from which I append a few excerpts:

Q: How do you feel about Norfolk nowadays?

Carson: I'm very glad I grew up in a small community. Big cities are where alienation sets in.

Q: Has success made you happy?

Carson: I have very high ups and very low downs. I can all of a sudden be depressed, sometimes without knowing why. But on the whole I think I'm relatively happy.

Q: Who do you admire most, of all the guests you've interviewed?

Carson: People like Carl Sagan, Paul Ehrlich, Margaret Mead . . . (*He recites the official list, already quoted, of Most Valued Performers.*)

Q: In all your life, what are you proudest of?

Carson: Giving a commencement address like this has made me as proud as anything I've ever done.

The applause at the end was so clamorous that Carson felt compelled to improvise a postscript. "If you're happy in what you're doing, you'll like yourself," he said. "And if you like yourself, you'll have inner peace. And if you have that, along with physical health, you will have had more success than you could possibly have imagined. I thank you all very much." He left the stage to a further outburst of cheers, having established what may be a record for speakers on such occasions: throughout the evening, he had made no reference to the deity, the flag, or the permissive society; nor had he used the phrase "this great country of ours."

After graduating from Norfolk, in 1943, Carson enrolled in the Navy's V-12 program, but training did not start until the fall, so he filled in time by hitchhiking to California. There, in order to gain access to the many entertainments that were offered free of charge to servicemen, he stopped off at an Army-Navy store and prematurely bought himself a naval cadet's uniform. Thus attired, he danced with Marlene Dietrich at the Hollywood Stage Door Canteen. Later, he travelled south to see Orson Welles give a display of magic in San Diego, where he responded to the maestro's request for a volunteer from the audience and ecstatically permitted himself to be sawed in half. That night, he was arrested by two M.P.s and charged with impersonating a member of the armed forces—an offense that cost him fifty dollars in bail. After induction, he attended the midshipmen's school at Columbia University and served in the Pacific aboard the battleship Pennsylvania. Never exposed to combat, he had plenty of time to polish his conjuring skills. In 1946, discharged from the Navy, he entered the University of Nebraska, where he majored in English and moonlighted as a magician, by now earning twenty-five dollars per appearance. In need of an assistant, he hired a girl student named Jody Wolcott; he married her in 1948. (To dispose, as briefly as possible, of Carson's marital history: The liaison with Jody produced three sons—Chris, Ricky, and Cory—and was finally dissolved, after four years of separation, in 1963. "My greatest personal failure," Carson has said, "was when I was divorced from my first wife." In August, 1963, he married Joanne Copeland, aged thirty, a diminutive, dark-haired model

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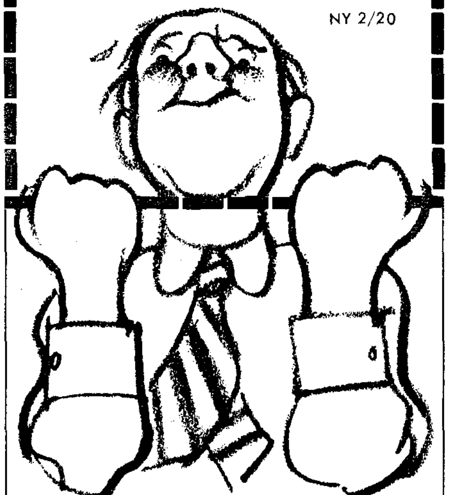

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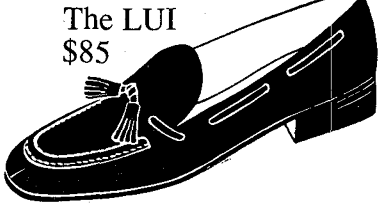

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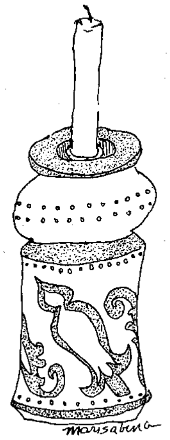
and occasional actress. They parted company in 1970 but were not legally sundered until two years later, when the second Mrs. Carson was awarded a settlement of nearly half a million dollars, in addition to an annual hundred thousand in alimony. She had by then moved from New York to Los Angeles. Shortly afterward, Carson migrated to the West Coast, bringing the show with him. Between these two events she discerns a causal connection. She has also declared that when, at a Hollywood party, Carson first met his next wife-to-be, "she was standing with her back to him, and he went right up to her, thinking it was me." On matters such as this, Carson's lips are meticulously sealed. All we know—or need to know—is that on September 30, 1972, during a gaudy celebration at the Beverly Hills Hotel in honor of his tenth anniversary on the "Tonight Show," he stepped up to the microphone and announced that at one-thirty that afternoon he had married Joanna Holland. Of Italian lineage, and a model by profession, she was thirty-two years old. They are still together. It is difficult to see how Carson could have mistaken her, even from behind, for her predecessor. She could not be sanely described as diminutive. Dark-haired, yes; but of medium height and voluptuous build. The third Mrs. Carson is the kind of woman, bright and *molto simpatica*, whom you would expect to meet not in Bel Air but at a cultural soirée in Rome, where—as like as not—she would be more than holding her own against the earnest platonic advances of Michelangelo Antonioni.)



Carson's post-college career follows the route to success traditionally laid down for a television— What? Personality-cum-comedian-cum-interviewer? No single word yet exists to epitomize his function, though it has had many practitioners, from Steve Allen, the archetypal pioneer, to the hosts of the latest and grisliest giveaway shows. In Carson's case, there are ten steps to stardom. (1) A multi-purpose job (at forty-seven dollars and fifty cents a week) as disc jockey, weather reporter, and reader of commercials on an Omaha radio station, where he breaks a precedent or two; e.g., when he is required to conduct pseudo-interviews, consisting of answers prerecorded by minor celebrities and distributed to small-town d.j.s with a list of matching questions, he flouts custom by ignoring the script. Instead of asking Patti Page how she began performing, he says, "I understand you're hitting the bottle pretty good, Patti—when did you start?," which elicits the taped reply "When I was six, I used to get up at church socials and do it." (2) A work-hunting foray, in 1951, to San Francisco and Los Angeles, which gets him nowhere except back to Omaha. (3) A sudden summons, later in the same year, from a Los Angeles television station, KNXT, offering him a post as staff announcer, which he accepts, at a hundred and thirty-five dollars a week. (4) A Sunday-afternoon show of his own ("KNXT *cautiously* presents 'Carson's Cellar' "), produced on a weekly budget of twenty-five dollars, plus fifty for Carson. It becomes what is known as a cult success (a golden phrase, which unlocks many high-level doors), numbering among its fans—and subsequently its guests—such people as Fred Allen, Jack Benny, and Red Skelton. (5) Employment, after thirty weeks of "Carson's Cellar," as a writer and supporting player on Skelton's CBS-TV show. (6) The Breakthrough, which occurs in 1954 and is brought about, in strict adherence to the "Forty-second Street" formula, by an injury to the star: Skelton literally knocks himself out while rehearsing a slapstick routine, and Carson, at roughly an hour's notice, triumphantly replaces him. (7) The Breakdown: CBS launches "The Johnny Carson Show," a half-hour program that goes through seven directors, eight writers, and thirty-nine weeks of worsening health before expiring, in the spring of 1956. (8) Carson picks self up, dusts self off, starts all over again. On money borrowed from his father, he moves from the West Coast to New York, where he joins the Friars Club, impresses its show-business membership with his cobra-swift one-liners, makes guest appearances on TV, and generally repairs his damaged reputation until (9) he is hired by ABC, in 1957, to run its quiz program "Who Do You Trust?," on which he spends the five increasingly prosperous years that lead him to (10) the "Tonight Show," and thence to the best table in the Polo Lounge, where he has been waiting for several minutes when I arrive, precisely on time.

He is making copious notes on a pad. I ask what he is writing. He says he has had an idea for tonight's monologue. In Utah, yesterday, the convicted murderer Gary Gilmore, who had aroused national interest by his refusal to appeal against the death sentence passed upon him, got his wish by facing a firing squad—Utah being a state where the law allows condemned criminals to select the method by which society will rid itself of them. Thus, the keepers of the peace have shot a man to death at his own urgent request. Carson's comment on this macabre situation takes the form of black comedy. Since justice must be seen to be done, why not let the viewing public in on the process of choice? Carson proposes a new TV show, to be called "The Execution Game." It would work something like this: Curtains part to reveal the death chamber, in the middle of which is an enormous wheel, equipped with glittering lights and a large golden arrow, to be spun by the condemned man to decide the nature of his fate. For mouth-watering prizes—ranging from a holiday for two in the lovely Munich suburb of Dachau to a pair of front-row seats at the victim's terminal throes—members of the audience vie with one another to guess whether the arrow will come to rest on the electric chair, the gas chamber, the firing squad, the garrote, or the noose.

This routine seems to me apt and mordant, and I tell Carson that I look forward to seeing it developed this evening. (Footnote: I looked in vain. The January 18th edition of the "Tonight Show" contained no mention of Gary Gilmore's execution apart from a terse and oddly sour sentence—"Capital punishment is a great deterrent to monologues"—inserted without build-up or comic payoff in Carson's opening spiel. A couple of nights later, one of his guests was Shelley Winters, who burst into an attack on the death penalty, using the Gilmore case as her springboard. Carson showed a distinctly nervous reluctance to commit himself; indeed, he shied away from the subject, and cut the discussion short by saying, "There are no absolutes." Yet I had seen him writing a piece that implied fairly bitter opposition to the process of judicial killing. What had happened? I called up Fred de Cordova, who admitted, after some hesitation, that he had disliked the "Execution Game" idea and that the network had backed him up. There had been a convulsive row with Carson, but in the end "Johnny saw reason" and the item was dropped. Hence his remark, meaningless except to insiders, about capital punishment's being "a great deter-

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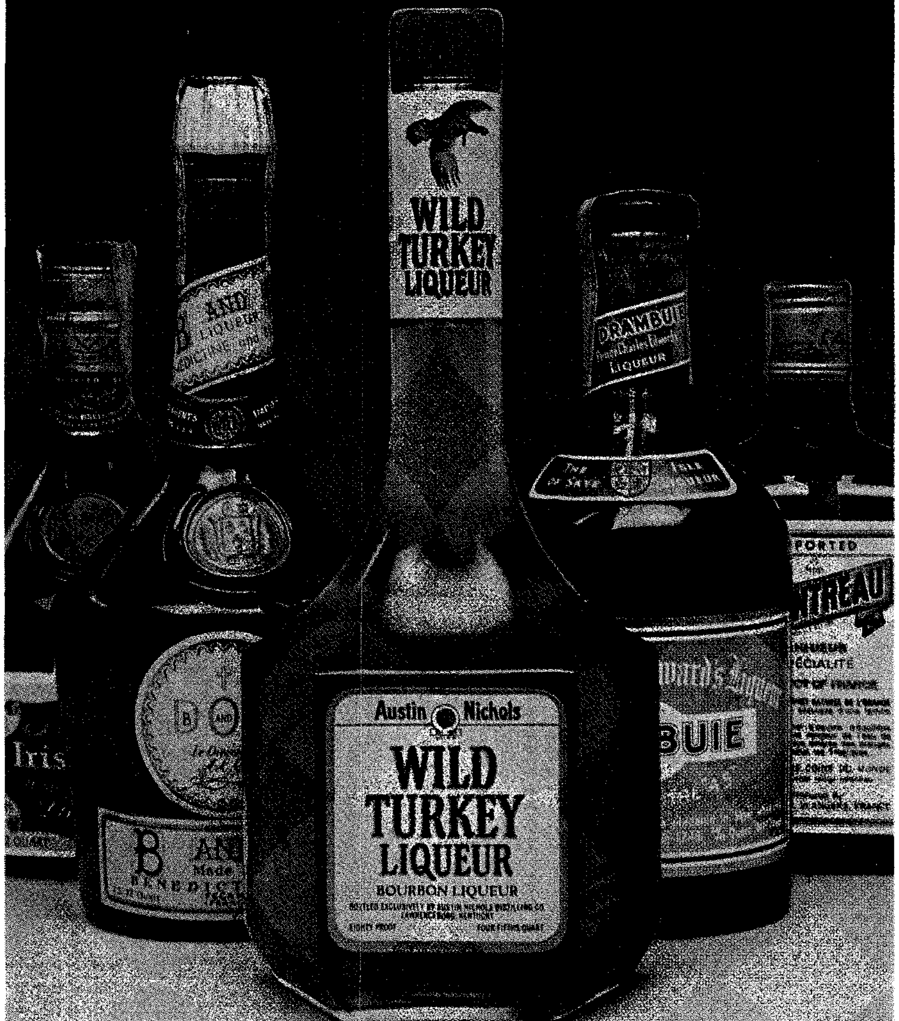

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rent to monologues;" and so much for de Cordova's description of Carson as a supreme "self-editor" who never needed censorship.)

A believer in eating only when one is hungry, Carson orders nothing more than a salad and some mineral water. "I gave up drinking a couple of years ago," he says. "I couldn't handle it." He adds that we can chat until two o'clock, when he must be off to Burbank. He doesn't know who is lined up to appear tonight. This prompts an obligatory question: Which guests has he coveted and failed to corral? "Cary Grant, of course. But straight actors often get embarrassed on the show. They say they feel naked. Their business is to play other people, and it bugs them to have to speak as themselves. Naturally, I'd be glad to have Henry Kissinger. And it was a great sorrow to me when Charles Laughton, whom we'd been after for ages, died a few days before he was scheduled to appear. But on the whole I'm pretty content to have had a list of guests like Paul Ehrlich, Gore Vidal, Carl Sagan, Madalyn Murray O'Hair . . ." He flips through the familiar roster. "And it gives me a special kick to go straight from talking to that kind of person into an all-out slapstick routine." He runs over his rules for coping with fellow-comedians on the program: "You have to lay back and help them. Never compete with them. I learned that from Jack Benny. The better they are, the better the show is." (In more immature days, Carson's technique was less self-effacing. The late Jack E. Leonard told a reporter in 1967, "You say a funny line on Griffin, and he laughs and says, 'That's brilliant.' Carson repeats it, scavenging, hunting all over for the last vestiges of the joke, trying desperately to pull a laugh of his own out of it.") Carson continues, "When people get outrageous, you have to capitalize on their outrageousness and go along with it. The only absolute rule is: Never lose control of the show."

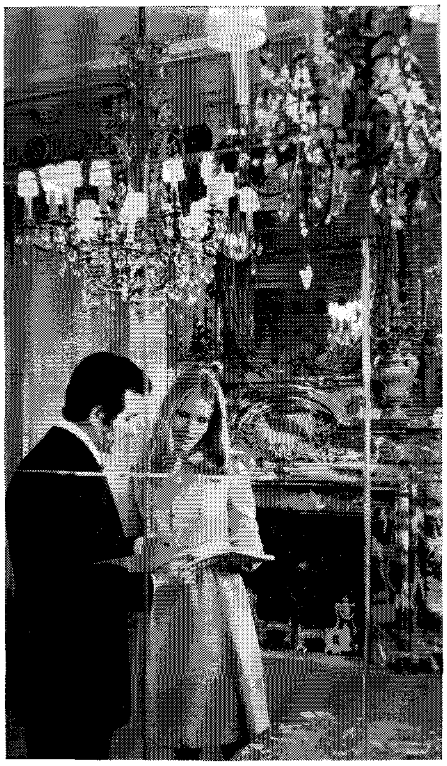
To stay in control is the hardest trick of all, especially when the talk veers toward obscenity; you have to head it off, preferably with a laugh, before it crashes through the barrier of public acceptance. At times, you have to launch a preëmptive strike of salaciousness in order to get an interview started. "Not long ago, a movie starlet came on the show with gigantic breasts bulging out of a low-cut dress," Carson says. "The audience couldn't look at anything else. If I'd ignored them, nobody would have listened to a word we said. There was only one thing to do. As soon as she sat down, I stared straight at her cleavage and said, 'That's the biggest set of jugs I ever saw.' It got a tremendous laugh. 'Now that we've got that out of the way,' I said, 'let's talk.' "

High on his list of favorite guests is Don Rickles, though he feels that Rickles has sadly mishandled his own TV career: "He went in for situation comedy and tried to be lovable. And he failed every time. What he needed—and I've told him this over and over again—was a game show called something like 'Meet Don Rickles,' where he could be himself and insult the audience, the way Groucho did on 'You Bet Your Life.' " Although Carson himself is less acid than he used to be, he is still capable of slapping down visitors who get uppish with him. "There was one time," he recalls, "when we had Tuesday Weld on the program, and she started behaving rather snottily. I finally asked her something innocuous about her future plans, and she said she'd let me know 'when I'm back on the show next year.' I was very polite. I just said that I hadn't scheduled her again quite that soon." Beyond doubt, Carson's least beloved subjects are British comedians, of whom he says, "I find them unfunny, infantile, and obsessed with toilet jokes. They're lavatory-minded." (It is true that British comics sometimes indulge, on TV, in scatological—and sexual—humor that would not be permitted on any American network; but this kind of liberty, however it may be abused, seems to me infinitely preferable to the restrictiveness that prevented Buddy Hackett, Carson's principal guest on February 1, 1977, from completing a single punch line without being bleeped.) I throw into the conversation my own opinion, which is that to shrink from referring to basic physical functions is to be truly infantile; to make good jokes about them, as about anything else, is evidence of maturity. It is depressing to reflect that if Rabelais were alive today he would not be invited to appear on the "Tonight Show."

Carson once said, "I've never seen it chiselled in stone tablets that TV must be uplifting." I ask him how he feels about his talk-show competitor Dick Cavett. His answer is brisk: "The trouble with Dick is that he's never decided what he wants to be—whether he's going for the sophisticated, intellectual viewer or for the wider audience. He falls between two stools. It gets so that you feel he's apologizing if he makes a joke." In reply to the accusation that his own show is intellectually jejune, Carson has this to say: "I don't want to get into big debates about abortion, homosexuality, prostitution, and so forth. Not because I'm afraid of them but because we all know the arguments on both sides, and they're circular. The fact is that TV is probably not the ideal place to discuss serious issues. It's much better to read about them." With this thought—self-serving but not easily refutable—he takes his leave.

FEBRUARY 10, 1977: The Hasty Pudding Club at Harvard has elected Carson its Man of the Year. There have been ten previous holders of the title, among them Bob Hope, Paul Newman, Robert Redford, James Stewart, Dustin Hoffman, and Warren Beatty. Delighted by the honor, because it is untainted by either lobbying or commercialism, Carson will fly to Harvard in two weeks' time to receive his trophy. While he is there, he will attend the opening night of "Cardinal Knowledge," the hundred-and-twenty-ninth in the series of all-male musicals presented by Hasty Pudding Theatricals, which claims to be the oldest dramatic society in the United States. I am to travel with Carson on what will be his first trip to Harvard. To give me details of the program of events that the Pudding people have prepared for him, he asks me to his home in Bel Air, where I present myself at 11 A.M. It is roughly five minutes by car from the Beverly Hills Hotel, and was built in 1950 for the director Mervyn LeRoy. Carson bought it five years ago, and, like many places where West Coast nabobs dwell, it is about as grand as a house can be that has no staircase. When you turn in at the driveway, a voice issuing from the wall sternly inquires your name and business; if your reply pacifies it, iron gates swing open to admit you.

I am welcomed by Joanna Carson's secretary, a lively young woman named Sherry Fleiner, part of whose job consists of working with Mrs. C. for a charitable organization known as SHARE—Share Happily And Reap Endlessly—which raises funds for the mentally retarded. (Other than a married couple who act as housekeepers, the Carsons have no live-in servants.) Proffering Carson's apologies, Miss Fleiner says that he is out on the tennis court behind the house, halfway



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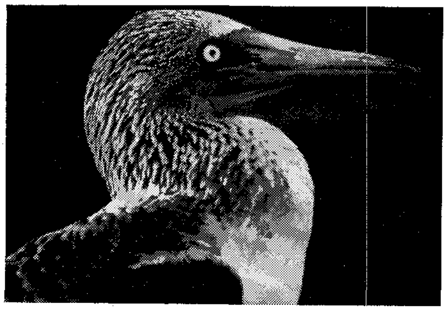

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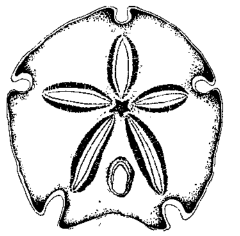
through a closely fought third set. While awaiting match point, I discreetly case the joint, which has (I learn from Miss Fleiner) six bedrooms. Except where privacy is essential, the walls are mainly of glass, and there is window-to-window carpeting with a zebra-stripe motif. Doors are infrequent. In accordance with local architectural custom, you do not leave one room to enter another, you move from one living area to the next. In the reading area (or "library") I spot a photograph of four generations of Carsons, the eldest being my host's grandfather Christopher Carson, who died two years ago at the age of ninety-eight, and I recall Carson's saying to me, in that steely, survivor's voice of his, "One thing about my family—we have good genes." On a wall nearby hangs a portrait of Carson by Norman Rockwell, the perfect artist for this model product of Middle American upbringing. Other works of art, scattered through the relaxing, ingesting, and greeting areas, reveal an eclectic, opulent, but not barbarously spendthrift taste; e.g., a well-chosen group of paintings by minor Impressionists; a camel made out of automobile bumpers by John Kearney and (an authentic rarity) a piece of sculpture by Rube Goldberg; together with statues and graphic art from the Orient and Africa. Over the fireplace in the relaxing area, a facile portrait of Mrs. Carson, who deserves more eloquent brushwork, smilingly surveys the swimming pool.

Having won his match, Carson joins me, his white sporting gear undarkened by sweat, and leads me out of the house to a spacious octagonal office he has built alongside the tennis court. This is his command module. It contains machinery for large-screen TV projection, and a desk of Presidential dimensions, bristling with gadgets. On a built-in sofa lies a cushion that bears the embroidered inscription "IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING." Coffee is served, and Carson offers me one of his cigarettes, which I refuse. He says that most people, even hardened smokers, do the same, and I do not find this surprising, since the brand he favors is more virulent and ferociously unfiltered than any other on the market. He briefs me on the impending Harvard visit—a day and a half of sightseeing, speech-making, banquets, conferences, seminars, and receptions that would tax the combined energies of Mencken, Mailer, and Milton Berle—and then throws himself open to me for further questioning.



Q: When you're at home, whom do you entertain?

CARSON: My lawyer, Henry Bushkin, who's probably my best friend. A few doctors. One or two poker players. Some people I've met through tennis, which is my biggest hobby right now—though I'm still interested in astronomy and scuba diving. And, of course, a couple of people who work on the show. But the point is that not many of my friends are exclusively show-business.

Q: Why do you dislike going to parties?

CARSON: Because I get embarrassed by attention and adulation. I don't know how to react to them in private. Swifty Lazar, for instance, sometimes embarrasses me when he praises me in front of his friends. I feel much more comfortable with a studio audience. On the show, I'm in control. Socially, I'm not in control.

Q: On the show, one of the things you control most strictly is the expression of your own opinions. Why do you keep them a secret from the viewers?

CARSON: I hate to be pinned down. Take the case of Larry Flynt, for example. [Flynt, the publisher of the sex magazine *Hustler*, had recently been convicted on obscenity charges.] Now, I think *Hustler* is tawdry, but I also think that if the First Amendment means what it says, then it protects Flynt as much as anyone else, and that includes the American Nazi movement. As far as I'm concerned, people should be allowed to read and see whatever they like, provided it doesn't injure others. If they want to read pornography until it comes out of their ears, then let them. But if I go on the "Tonight Show" and defend *Hustler*, the viewers are going to tag me as that guy who's into pornography. And that's going to hurt me as an entertainer, which is what I am.

Q: In private life, who's the wittiest man you've ever known?

CARSON: The wittiest would have to be Fred Allen. He appeared on a show I had in the fifties, called "Carson's Cellar," and I knew him for a while after that—until he died, in 1956. But there's an old vaudeville proverb—"A comic is a man who says funny things, and a comedian is a man who says things funny." If that's a valid distinction, then Fred was a comic, whereas Jonathan Winters and Mel

Brooks are comedians. But they make me laugh just as much.

Before I go, Carson takes me down to a small gymnasium beneath the module. It is filled with gleaming steel devices, pulleys and springs and counterweights, which, together with tennis, keep the star's body trim. In one corner stands a drum kit at which Buddy Rich might cast an envious eye. "That's where I work off my hostilities," Carson explains. He escorts me to my car, and notices that it is fitted with a citizens-band radio. "I had one of those damned things, but I ripped it out after a couple of weeks," he says. "I just couldn't bear it—all those sick anonymous maniacs shooting off their mouths."

I understand what he means. Most of what you hear on CB radio is either tedious (truck drivers warning one another about speed traps) or banal (schoolgirls exchanging notes on homework), but at its occasional—and illegal—worst it sinks a pipeline to the depths of the American unconscious. Your ears are assaulted by the sound of racism at its most rampant, and by masturbation fantasies that are the aural equivalent of rape. The sleep of reason, to quote Goya's phrase, brings forth monsters, and the anonymity of CB encourages the monsters to emerge. Not often, of course; but when they do, CB radio becomes the dark underside of a TV talk show. No wonder Carson loathes it.

FEBRUARY 24, 1977: Morning departure from Los Angeles Airport of flight bearing Boston-bound Carson party, which consists of Mr. and Mrs. C., Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bushkin, and me. Boyish-looking, with an easy smile, a soft voice, and a modest manner, Bushkin, to whom I talked a few days earlier, is a key figure in Carson's private and professional life. "Other stars have an agent, a personal manager, a business manager, a P.R. man, and a lawyer," he told me. "I serve all those functions for Johnny." Bushkin was born in the Bronx in 1942. He moved to the West Coast five years ago and swiftly absorbed the ground rules of life in Beverly Hills; e.g., he is likely to turn up at his desk in a cardigan and an open-necked shirt, thus obeying the precept that casualness of office attire increases in direct ratio to grandeur of status. He first met Carson through a common friend in 1970, when he was working for a small Manhattan law firm that specialized in show-business clients. At

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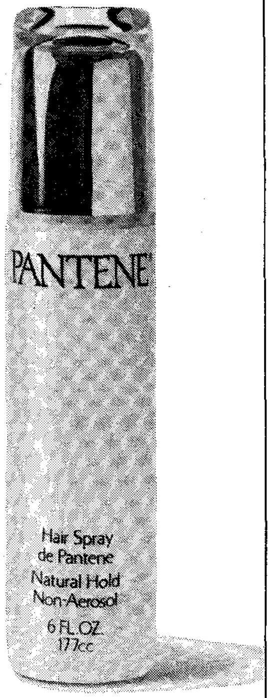

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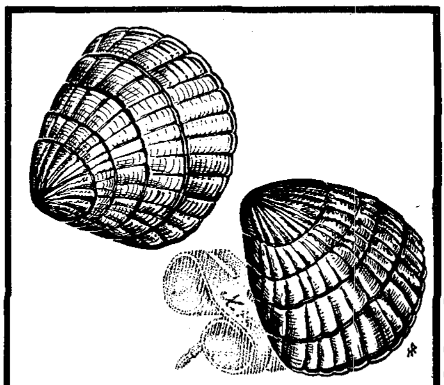

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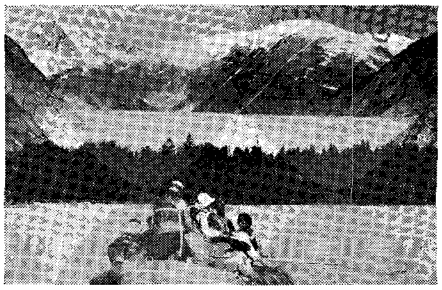

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that time, Carson lived at the United Nations Plaza, where one of his neighbors was David (Sonny) Werblin, formerly the driving force behind the Music Corporation of America and (until 1968) the president of the New York Jets. In 1969, Werblin had drawn up a plan whereby he and Carson would form a corporation, called Raritan Enterprises, to take over the entire production of the "Tonight Show," which would then be rented out to NBC for a vast weekly fee. Rather than risk losing Carson, the network caved in and agreed to Raritan's terms. "As the tax laws were in the late sixties, when you could pay up to ninety per cent on earned income, the Raritan scheme had certain advantages," Bushkin explained to me. "But there were handicaps that Johnny hadn't foreseen. Werblin had too many outside interests—for one thing, he owned a good-sized racing stable—and Johnny found himself managing the company as well as starring in the show, because his partner wasn't always there. When a major problem came up, he'd suddenly discover that Werblin had taken off for a month in Europe and couldn't be reached. Around 1972, Johnny decided that the plan wasn't working, and that's when he asked me to represent him. Not to go into details, let's just say that Werblin was painlessly eliminated from the setup. By that time, the maximum tax on earned income was down to fifty per cent, and that removed the basic motive for the corporate arrangement. So the show reverted to being an NBC operation. But Johnny went back with a much better financial deal than he had in 1969." When Bushkin came to Beverly Hills, in 1973, his life already revolved around Carson's. "It took about three years for our relationship to get comfortable, because Johnny isn't easy to know," he went on. "But now we're the best of friends, and so are our wives. The unwritten rule for lawyers is: Don't get too friendly with clients. But this is an unusual situation. This is Carson, and Carson's my priority."

Ed McMahon, I remarked, had predicted that Carson would stay with the "Tonight Show" until 1980. "I'll bet you that he's still there in 1984," Bushkin said.

If Carson can hold on as long as that, it would be churlish of NBC to unseat him before he reaches retiring age, in 1990.

5:30 P.M.: We land at Boston. Frost underfoot. Carson, following his new President's example, totes his suit (presumably the tuxedo required for tomorrow's festivities) off the plane. He murmurs to me, "If someone could get Billy Carter to sponsor a carry-off suitcase, they'd make a fortune." He walks through popping flashbulbs and a fair amount of hand-held-camera work to be greeted by Richard Palmer and Barry Sloane, undergraduate co-producers of the Hasty Pudding show, who look bland, businesslike, and utterly untheatrical; i.e., like co-producers. Waiting limos take Carsons and Bushkins to the Master's Residence at Eliot House, where they are to spend the night. I repair to my hotel.

8:30 P.M.: Pudding people give dinner for Carson and his entourage at waterfront restaurant called Anthony's Pier 4. When I announce destination, my cabdriver says, "That's the big Republican place. Gold tablecloths. Democrats like checked tablecloths. They go to Jimmy's Harbor Side." Décor at Anthony's features rustic beamery and period prints. Tablecloths definitely straw-colored, though cannot confirm that this has political resonance. Carson (in blue sports jacket, white shirt, and discreetly striped tie) sits beside wife (in brown woollen two-piece, with ring like searchlight on left hand) at round table with Bushkins, Pudding officials, and short, heavily tanned man with vestigial hair, dark silk suit, smoke-tinted glasses, and general aspect of semi-simian elegance. This, I learn, is David Tebet, the senior vice-president of NBC, whose suzerainty covers the Carson show, and who in May, 1977, will celebrate his twenty-first anniversary with the network. Of the three men who wield influence over Carson (the others being Bushkin and Fred de Cordova), Tebet is ultimately the most powerful. "It's a terrible thing to wish on him," Frank Sinatra once said of Tebet, "but it's too bad he's not in government today." In 1975, Robert D. Wood, then president of CBS-TV, described Tebet as "the ambassador of all NBC's good will—he sprinkles it around like ruby dust." With characteristic effusiveness, de Cordova has declared that the dust-sprinkler's real title should be "vice-president in charge of caring." In 1965, Carson came to the conclusion that he had to quit the "Tonight Show," because the daily strain was too great, but Tebet persuaded him to stay; what tipped the scale was the offer of an annual paid vacation of six weeks. Ten years later, Carson said he had a feeling that when he died a color TV set would be delivered to his graveside and "on it will be a ribbon and a note that says, 'Have a nice trip. Love, David.' "

During dinner, although wine is served, Carson drinks only coffee. He talks about "Seeds," a Wasp parody of "Roots," dealing with history of orthodox Midwestern family, which was recently broadcast on the "Tonight Show." Concept was his, and he is pleased with how it came out, though he regrets loss of one idea that was cut; viz., scene depicting primitive tribal ceremony at which the hyphen is ritually removed from Farrah Fawcett-Majors.

"He looks so mechanical," mutters a Pudding person on my right. "Like a talking propelling pencil." Same fellow explains to me that the club is divided into social and theatrical compartments. Former was founded in 1795; latter did not develop until 1844, when first show was presented, establishing an annual tradition that has persisted—apart from two inactive years in each of the World Wars—ever since. Pudding performers have included Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Randolph Hearst, Robert Benchley (star of "Below Zero," 1912), and Jack Lemmon. Tomorrow's production, which is to play a month at Pudding theatre, followed by quick tour to New York, Washington, and Bermuda, will cost a hundred thousand dollars. Revenue from box office and from program advertising, plus aid from wealthy patrons, will insure that it breaks even. (Undergraduates provide words, music, and cast; direction, choreography, and design are by professionals.) Publicity accruing from Carson's presence will boost ticket sales; thus, his visit amounts to unpaid commercial for show.

Another Pudding functionary tells me that club also bestows award on Woman of the Year—has, in fact, been doing so since 1951. First recipient was Gertrude Lawrence, Bette Midler got the nod in 1976, and last week Elizabeth Taylor turned up to collect the trophy for 1977. "She is genuinely humble," my informant gravely whispers. After dinner, Carson and wife are interviewed in banqueting salon of restaurant by local TV station. Mrs. C. is asked, "Did you fall in love with the private or the public Johnny Carson?" She replies, "I fell in love with both." Before further secrets of the confessional can be extracted, camera runs out of tape, to her evident relief.

February 25, 1977: Dining hall of

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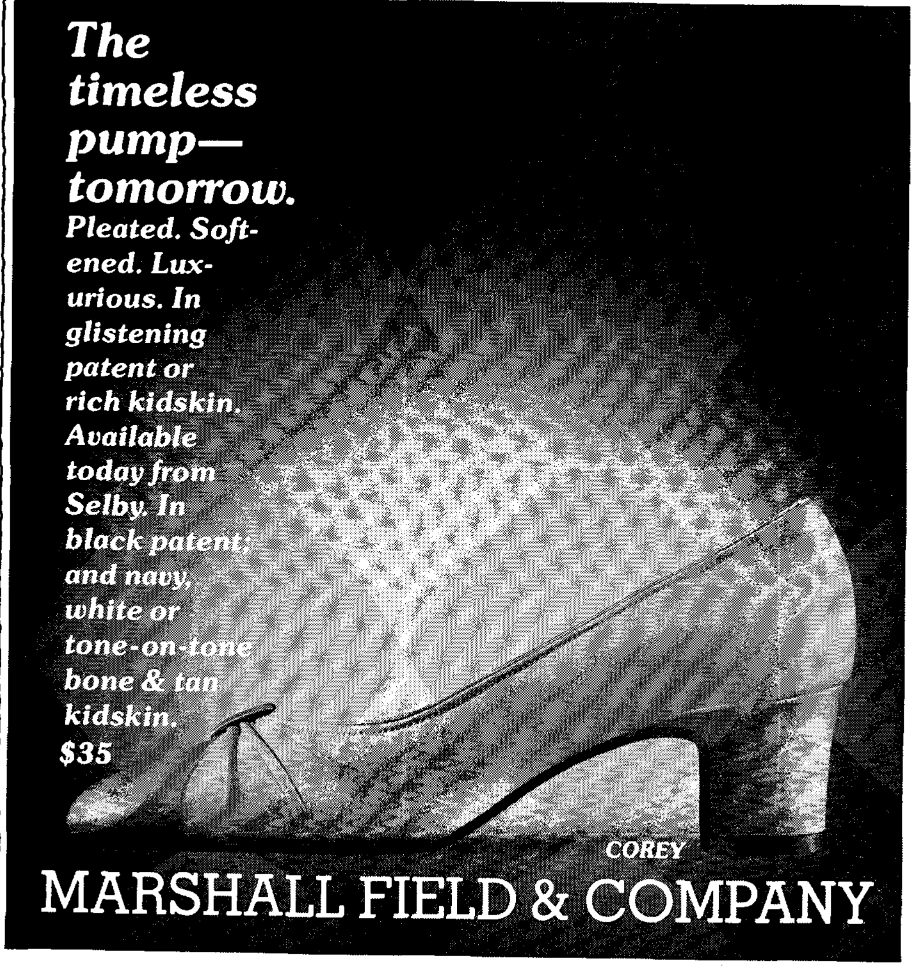

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Eliot House is crowded at 8:45 A.M. University band, with brass section predominant, lines up and plays "Ten Thousand Men of Harvard" as Carson (black-and-white checked sports jacket) leads his party in to breakfast. His every move is followed, as it will be all day, by television units, undergraduate film crew, and assorted press photographers. Asked by TV director whether sound system is to his liking, Carson says he has no complaints, "except I thought the microphone under the bed was pushing it a bit." Member of Harvard band achieves minor triumph of one-upmanship by conning Carson into inscribing and autographing autobiography of Dick Cavett.

Fast duly broken, party embarks on walking tour of Harvard Yard and university museums. Hundreds of undergraduates join media people in the crush around Carson, and police cars prowl in their wake to protect the star from terrorist assaults or kidnap attempts. Weather is slate-clouded and icy; Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Bushkin both wear mink coats. Climax of tour is meeting with John Finley, internationally eminent classical scholar and treasure of Harvard campus, Eliot Professor of Greek Literature Emeritus and Master of Eliot House Emeritus, whose study is in the Widener Library. (During previous week, I called Professor Finley to find out how he felt about forthcoming encounter with Carson. "At first, I thought it was an asinine idea," he said. "I've never seen the man on television—as a matter of fact, I've spent most of my life with my nose plunged into classical texts. But, after all, how important is one's time, anyway?") Carson is properly deferential in the presence of this agile septuagenarian. Eavesdropping on their conversation, I hear Professor Finley say, "Writing is like an artesian well that we sink to find the truth." He talks about Aristotle, getting little response, and then tries to clarify for Carson the distinction drawn by Lionel Trilling between sincerity and authenticity, in literature and in life. "President Carter is an example of sincerity," he explains. "But whether he has authenticity—well, that's another matter. I'm not sure that Trilling would have been much impressed." Cannot imagine what Carson is making of all this.

12:30 P.M.: Luncheon in Carson's honor at the A.D. Club, described to me by reliable source as "the second-stuffiest in Harvard." (First prize goes, by general consent, if not by acclamation, to the Porcellian Club. Choice of venue today is dictated by fact that co-producers of Pudding show are members of A.D. and not of Porcellian.) Atmosphere is robustly patrician enough to warm heart of late Evelyn Waugh: sprigs of Back Bay dynasties sprawl in leather armchairs beneath group photographs of their forebears. Club clearly deserves title of No. 2; it could not conceivably try harder. Members cheer as Carson enters, flanked by Bushkin and Tebet. (This is a strictly stag sodality.) About twenty guests present, among them Professor Finley and Robert Peabody, son of former governor of Massachusetts and vice-president of Pudding Theatricals—a bouncing two-hundred-and-fifty-pound lad much cherished by Pudding enthusiasts for his comic talent in drag. Carson, still rejecting grape in favor of bean, wears blue sweater, dark slacks, and burgundy patent-leather shoes. When meal is consumed, he makes charming speech of thanks, in which he regrets that life denied him the opportunity of studying under Prof. Finley. (Later, rather less lovably, he is to tell drama students at Pudding Club that from his lunchtime chat with Finley "I learned a hell of a lot more about Aristotle than I wanted to know.")

2 P.M.: Carson is driven to Pudding H.Q. on Holyoke Street—narrow thoroughfare jammed with fans, through whom club officials have to force a way to the entrance. Upstairs, in red-curtained reception room, Carson is to hold seminar with thirty handpicked undergraduates who are studying the performing arts. This select bunch of initiates sits in circle of red armchairs. Carson takes his place among them and awaits interrogation. Standard of questions, dismal for allegedly high-powered assembly, seldom rises above gossip level; e.g.:

Q: As a regular viewer, may I ask why you have switched from wearing a Windsor knot to a four-in-hand?

CARSON: Well, I guess that's about all we have time for. [Questioner presses for reply.] Just between ourselves, it's a defense mechanism.

Q: Did Jack Paar have someone like Ed McMahon to work with?

CARSON: No. A psychiatrist worked with Jack Paar. The last time I saw Paar was in *Philadelphia*. He was sitting on a curb and he had a swizzle stick embedded in his hand. I removed it.

Q: I've noticed that people don't always laugh at your monologue. Why is that?

CARSON: Well, we don't actually *structure* it to go down the toilet. But we work from the morning papers and sometimes the audience isn't yet aware of what's happened in the news.

Q: How do you really feel about Jimmy Carter?

Carson: The Carter Administration is perfect comedy material. And I think he rented the family. I don't believe Lillian is his mother. I don't believe Billy is his brother. They're all from Central Casting.

Q: Do you normally watch the show when you get home?

Carson: No. I'd get worn out from seeing it all over again. If we're breaking in a new character, I'll watch.

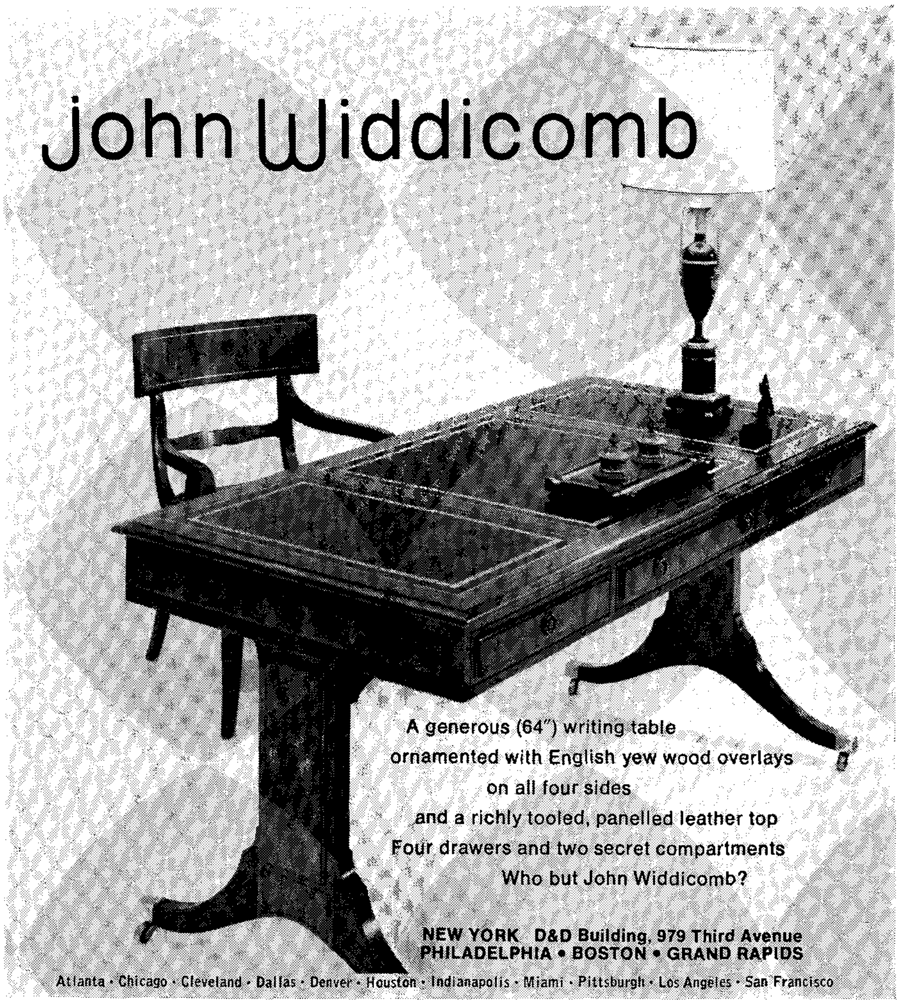
Q [first of any substance]: Has the "Tonight Show" done anything more important than just brighten up the end of the day?

Carson: I'd say it was quite important to let people hear the opinions of people like Paul Ehrlich, Carl Sagan, Gore Vidal, Margaret Mead . . . [Vide supra, passim.] We've also taken an interest in local politics. One year, there were eleven candidates for Mayor of Burbank, and we had to give them all equal time. That was pretty public-spirited. But what's important? I think it's important to show ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Like we once had a Japanese guy from Cleveland who wanted to be a cop but he was too short, so his wife had been hanging him up every night by his heels. And it's important to help people live out their fantasies, like when I pitched to Mickey Mantle on the show, or when I played quarterback for the New York Jets. But a lot of the time TV is judged by the wrong standards. If Broadway comes up with two first-rate new plays in a season, the critics are delighted. That's a good season. But on TV they expect that every week. It's a very visible medium to jump on. And there's another thing that isn't generally realized. If you're selling hard goods—like soap or dog food—you simply can't afford to put on culture. Exxon, the Bank of America—organizations like that can afford to do it. But they aren't selling hard goods, and that's what the "Tonight Show" has to do. [Applause for candor. This is the nearest approach to hard eloquence I have heard from Carson, and he sells it to great effect.]

Q: What is Charo really like?

This reduces Carson to silence, bringing the seminar to a close.

4:30 P.M.: Cocktail party for Carson at Club Casablanca, local haunt crowded to point just short of asphyxiation. Star and companions have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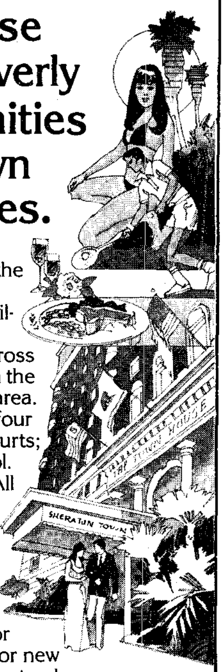

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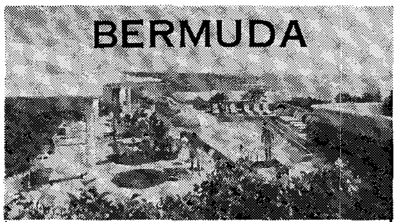

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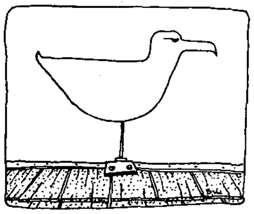
changed into evening dress. Carson tells me how Prof. Finley sought to explain to him eternal simplicities of Aristotle's view of life, and adds, "He's out of touch with the real world." Subject for debate: By what criteria can Carson's world be said to be closer to reality than Aristotle's? Or, for that matter, than Professor Finley's? Carson group and non-acting Pudding dignitaries then proceed on foot to nearby bistro called Ferdinand's for early dinner. Eating quite exceptional soft-shell crabs, I sit next to Joanna C., who has flashing eyes and a quill-shaped Renaissance nose. Her mother's parents came from northern Italy; her father's family background is Sicilian. She introduced Carson to what is now his favorite Manhattan restaurant, an Italian place named Patsy's, and her immediate ambition is to coax him to visit Italy. Eying her husband (who must be well into his second gallon of coffee since breakfast), she tells me that the only time she has seen him cry was at the funeral of Jack Benny, who befriended and helped him from his earliest days in TV. She doesn't think he will still be on the "Tonight Show" when he's sixty (i.e., in 1985). "Of course, everybody wants him to act," she continues. "He was offered the Steve McQueen part in 'The Thomas Crown Affair,' and Mel Brooks begged him to play the Gene Wilder part in 'Blazing Saddles.' He read the script twice. Then he called Mel from Acapulco and said, 'I read it in L.A. and it wasn't funny, and it's even less funny in Mexico.' "

David Tebet, seated opposite, leans across table and tells me what he does. His voice is a serrated baritone growl. From what I gather, he is a combination of talent detector, ego masseur (of NBC stars), and thief (of other networks' stars). Has been quoted as saying that he judges performers by "a thing called gut reaction," and that he understands "their soft underbellies." To a thing called my surprise, he adds that these qualities of intestinal intuition help to keep stars reassured. According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, a two-thousand-year-old samurai sword hangs over the door of his New York office. Am not certain that this would have reassuring effect on me. It may, however, explain enigmatic remark of Bob Hope, who once referred to Tebet as "my Band-Aid." Razor-edged weapon is part of huge Tebet art collection (mainly Oriental but also including numerous prints and lithographs by Mucha, Klimt, Schiele, Munch, et al.), much of which adorns his NBC suite. Tebet claims this makes actors feel at home. But at whose home?



7 P.M.: Back to Pudding Club for pre-performance press conference. I count five movie and/or TV cameras, eight microphones, about thirty photographers, and several dozen reporters, all being jostled by roughly a hundred and fifty guests, gate-crashers, and ticket-holders diverted from route to auditorium by irresistible surge of Carson-watchers. Bar serves body-temperature champagne in plastic glasses; Carson requests slug of water.

Reporter asks what he thinks of Barbara Walters' million-dollar contract with ABC News.

He replies, "I think Harry Reasoner has a contract out for Barbara Walters."

Press grilling is routine stuff, except for:

Q: What would you like your epitaph to be?

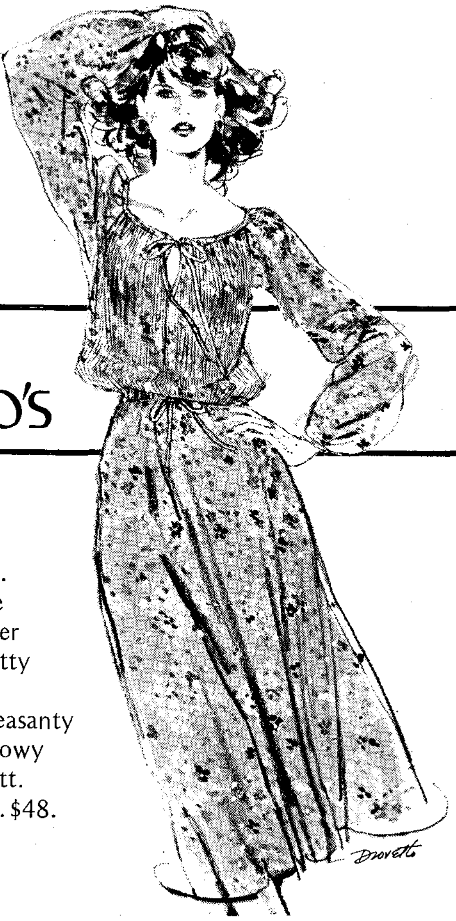
CARSON [after pause for thought]: I'll be right back.

Laughter and applause for this line, the traditional cliché with which talk-show hosts segue into commercial break. Subsequent research reveals that Carson has used it before in answer to same question. Fact increases my respect for his acting ability. That pause for thought would have fooled Lee Strasberg.

8 P.M.: Join expectant crowd in Pudding theatre, attractive little blue auditorium with three hundred and sixty-three seats. Standees line walls. In fat program I read tribute to "that performer who has made the most outstanding contribution to the entertainment profession during the past years—Johnny Carson." Article also states that in the fifties he wrote for "The Red Skeleton Show"—ideal title, I reflect, for Vincent Price Special—and concludes by summing up Carson's gifts in a burst of baroque alliteration: "Outspoken yet disciplined, he is a pool of profanity, a pit of profundity." Audience by now buzzing with impatience to hear from pool (or pit) in person.

Co-producer Palmer takes the stage and, reading from notes, pays brief homage to "a performer whose wit, humor, and showmanship rank him among America's greatest—ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Johnny Carson!" Band plays "Tonight Show" theme as Carson walks down the aisle and clambers up to shake Palmer's hand. Standing ovation greets him. Co-producer Sloane emerges from wings and solemnly presents him with small golden pudding pot. Ovation persists—three hundred and sixty-three seats are empty. When it and the spectators have subsided, Carson holds up his hands for silence and then makes speech precisely right for occasion. (Without notes, of course, as befits man who, if program is to be believed, has "liberated the airwaves from scripted domination.") He begins by saying that it is gratifying to hear so much applause without anyone's brandishing a sign marked "Applause." He thanks the club for the honor bestowed on him, even though (he adds) "I understand that this year the short list for the award was me, Idi Amin, and Larry Flynt." He expresses special gratitude for the hospitality extended to his wife and to him by Eliot House: "It's the first time I've scored with a chick on campus since 1949." He has never visited the university before. However, it has played a small but significant role in his family history: "My Great-Uncle Orville was here at Harvard. Unfortunately, he was in a jar in the biology lab." Widening his focus, he throws in a couple of comments on the state of the nation. Apropos of the recent and groundless panic over immunizing the population against a rumored epidemic of swine flu: "Our government has finally come up with a cure for which there is no known disease." And a nostalgic shot at a familiar target: "I hear that whenever anyone in the White House tells a lie, Nixon gets a royalty." End of address. Sustained cheers, through which Carson returns, blinking in a manner not wholly explicable by the glare of the spotlights, to his seat.

"Cardinal Knowledge," the Pudding musical, at last gets under way. It's a farrago of melodramatic intrigue, with seventeenth-century setting and plethora of puns; e.g., characters called Barry de Hatchet and Viscount Hugh Behave. (How far can a farrago go?) Am pleased by high standard of performance, slightly dismayed by lack of obscenity in text. No need to dwell on show, except to praise Robert Peabody, mountainously flirtatious as Lady Della Tory, and Mark Szpak, president of Pudding Theatricals, who plays the heroine, Juana deBoise, with a raven-haired Latin vivacity that puts me in mind of the youthful Lea



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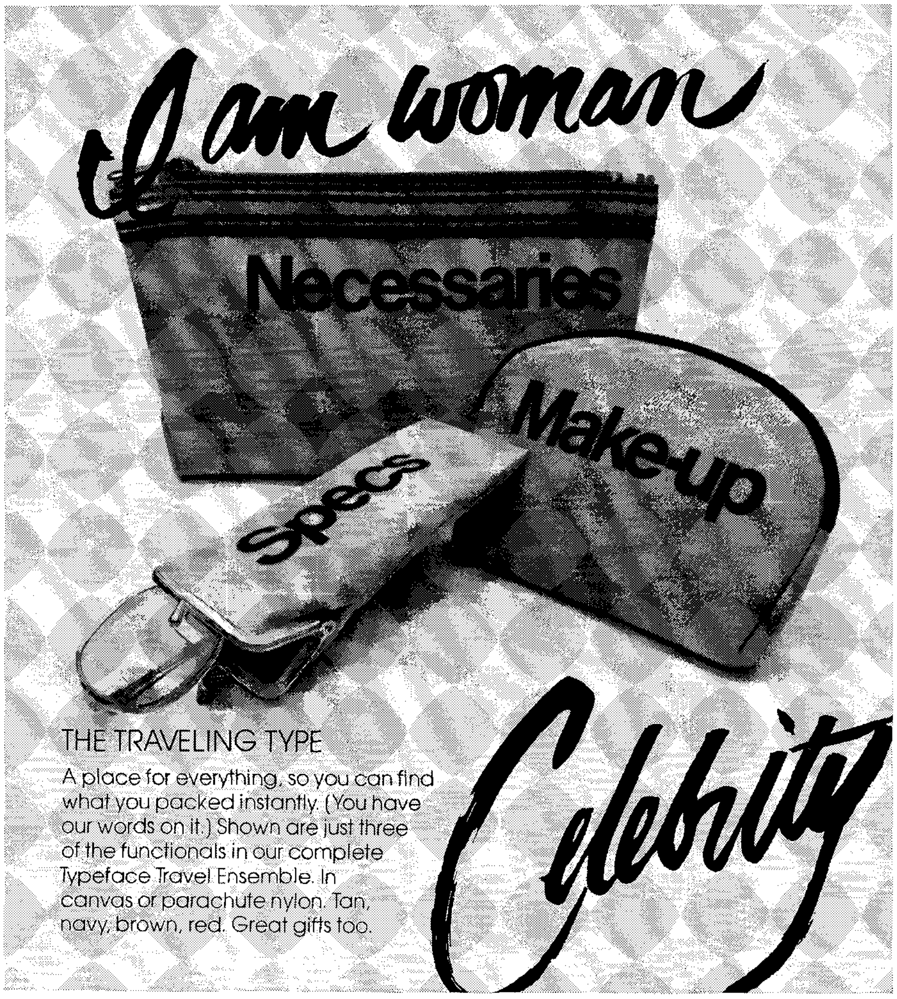

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10:15 P.M.: Intermission not yet over. Carson at bar, still on caffeine, besieged by mass of undergraduates, all of whom receive bright and civil answers to their questions. He has now been talking to strangers for thirteen hours (interrupted only by Act I of show) with no loss of buoyancy. "For the first time in my life," he remarks to me, "I know what it's like to be a politician."

Midnight has passed before the curtain falls and he makes his exit, to renewed acclamation. One gets the impression that the audience is applauding not just an admired performer but—why shun simplicities?—a decent and magnanimous man.

TWO thoughts in conclusion: (1) If the most we ask of live television is entertainment within the limits set by commercial sponsorship, then Carson, week in, week out, is the very best we shall get. If, on the other hand, we ask to be challenged, disturbed, or provoked at the same time that we are entertained, Carson must inevitably disappoint us. But to blame him for that would be to accuse him of breaking a promise he never made.

(2) Though the written and rehearsed portions of what Carson does can be edited together into an extremely effective cabaret act, the skill that makes him unique—the ability to run a talk show as he does—is intrinsically, exclusively televisual. Singers, actors, and dancers all have multiple choices: they can exercise their talents in the theatre, on TV, or in the movies. But a talk-show host can only become a more successful talk-show host. There is no place in the other media for the gifts that distinguish him—most specifically, for the gift of re-inventing himself, night after night, without rehearsal or repetition. Carson, in other words, is a grand master of the one show-business art that leads nowhere. He has painted himself not into a corner but onto the top of a mountain.

Long—or, at least, as long as the air at the summit continues to nourish and elate him—may he stay there.

—KENNETH TYNAN

●

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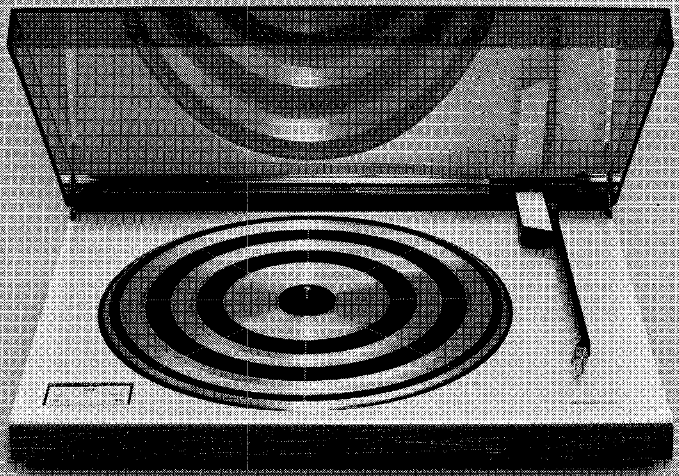

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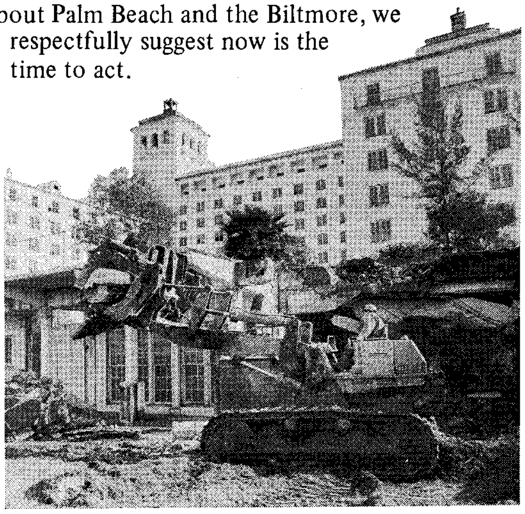


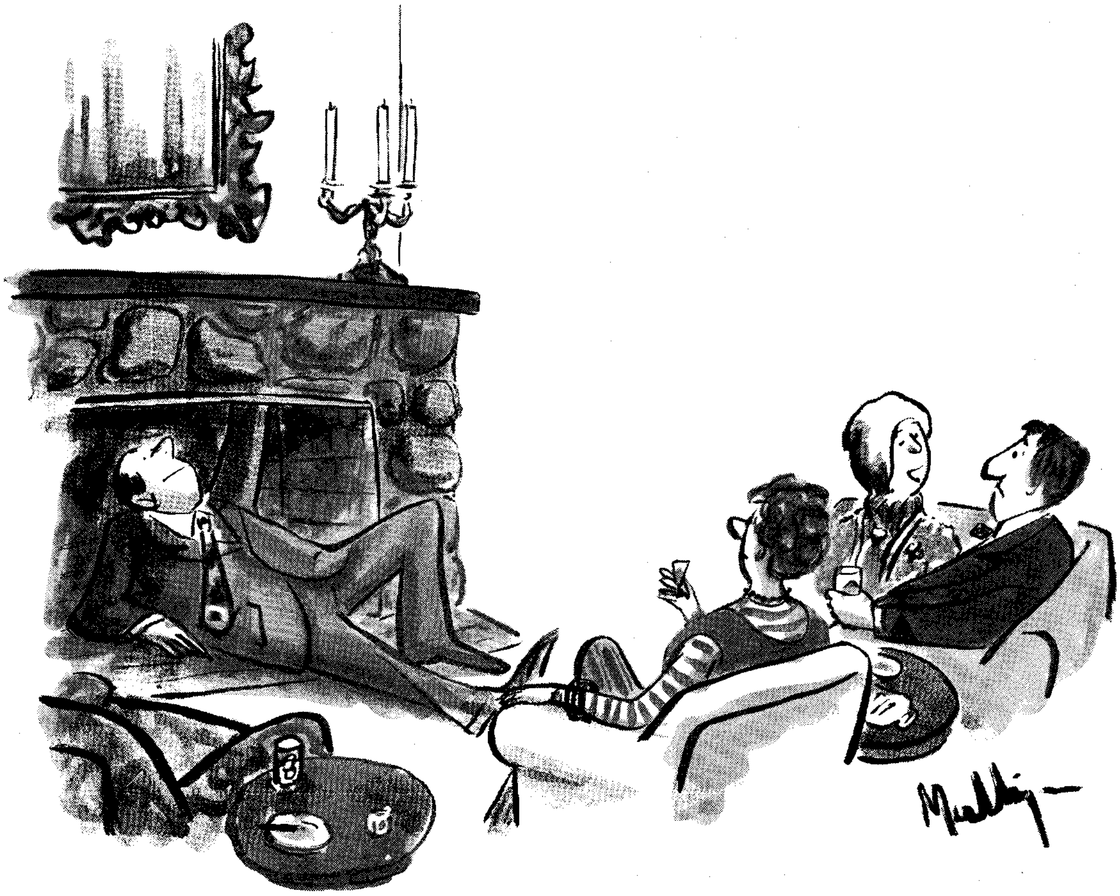
THE ART WORLD

Inquest Into Modernism

THE absence of an avant-garde—or the low level of interest in what presents itself as an avant-garde—has begun to seem a normal condition of contemporary art. After several years of disappointed expectation, the conviction has been growing that no significant "advances" in painting and sculpture are around the corner. The most distinguished American work exhibited in 1977 was by old-timers—de Kooning, Lester Johnson, David Hare, Philip Guston, Helen Frankenthaler, Louise Nevelson, Joan Mitchell, Lee Krasner, Joellen Hall, Lee Hall, to name a few—and in modes not long ago considered obsolete. In the museums, art was taken over by the dead—by the craftsmen of King Tutankhamen, by Cézanne, Ensor, Matisse—and shows announced for this year indicate that curators now find the graveyard an inexhaustible source. As a *Times* critic pointed out some years ago, considering what the ancient Chinese, for example, have to offer, new works are by no means indispensable. Indeed, despite the present "lull" in creativity, the art world has never been in better shape. The art public keeps growing; museums are packed; in disregard of economic gloom, new galleries open, it seems, daily; government and industry support for "the arts" increases each year; the art market continues to outpace the Dow. That all this takes place without the stimulus of new creative movements gives some—mainly artists—the uneasy feeling that the expanding social edifice of art is being built around a void. Yet looking for a vanguard may itself be a mere habit left over from the past.

With vanguardism declining as a force in the American art world, a transformation of values has occurred: novelty in art appears unessential. Even the idea of a vanguard is repudiated. In a recent article, a prominent reviewer charged avant-gardists with ingratitude for failing to respect the middle class, who have historically been their patrons. Periods of decline in collective creative energies are by no means unusual, either in art or in politics. What is peculiar to our time is that each lapse into torpor threatens to become permanent. The forecast of an ice age, or "wasteland," is built into present-day culture. Except for intervals of great inner vigor, the weight of institutional inertia seems capable of subjecting all human activities to mechanical laws. To conquer the world, the Grand Inquisitor needs only to bide his time. And modern culture, like some cultures of the past, has enemies within—people who denounce its reflection of the world and strive to cause it to disappear. A lapse of the modernist will such as the present one provides the foes of modernism with an occasion to claim that the entire modernist effort has been a blunder—if not vandalism or a hoax. After more than half a century, it is still argued against modernist art that Picasso would have liked human beings to have both eyes on the same side of their face.

Anti-modern attitudes are a traditional element in modernist thinking and enter into the most advanced art of the epoch; e.g., the primitivism of Klee and Mondrian, the cultural nostalgia of Pound and Rilke. For several years, the term "post-modern" has been striving to gain a foothold. One finds it used increasingly as a label for the contemporary. To some, it seems to signify a condition beyond the modern—a compound of phenomena that had not been contemplated even in the most radical hypotheses and moods of the modernists: mysteries akin to the Eurodollar and the cruise missile, in the light (or darkness) of which Duchamp, Joyce, Breton, Gertrude Stein, Kafka appear as respectable relics of a quieter age. But "post-modern" also has a contrary meaning: it denotes a period in which the radical aberrations of modern thought and modern art have at last been shaken off. In the wake of student riots and terrorist bombings and kidnappings, the extremisms of the twentieth-century avant-gardes have exposed their nihilistic substance and have been repudiated as legitimate avenues of progress. If some outstanding modernist artists can be admired as masters, it is because, the post-modern critic argues, they are illuminated craftsmen, like artists of other times, and owe nothing to vanguardist dogmas. Whether because the contemporary situation is no longer thought to be manageable by ideas (as the vanguards assumed it was) or because society has become too disillusioned, or too level-



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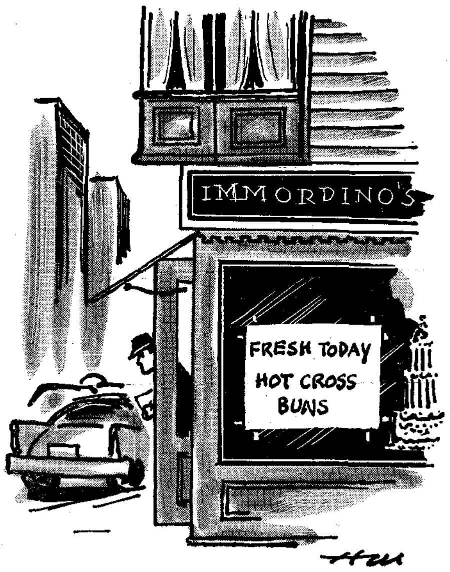
headed, to be taken in by utopian fantasies, post-modernism has no use for vanguards. In fact, the essential connotation of "post-modern" may be "a period without vanguards." Though the cultural situation remains unclear, the intuition of the obsolescence of vanguards may represent a historical reality.

IN an article entitled "One Hundred Metronomes," in the Autumn, 1977, issue of *The American Scholar*, Edward T. Cone, of Princeton, mounts an investigation not of any vanguard, current or past, but of modern art in general, from such grand marshals as Matisse—"There are still many for whom Matisse's paintings remain daubs"—to local guerrilla activists such as Vito Acconci and Carl Andre. (Symbolism may be discovered in the fact that Mr. Cone is a member of the Baltimore family historically associated with Gertrude Stein and Matisse.) Though Cone is a teacher and composer of music, most of his examples of the weaknesses and fallacies of modernism are drawn from the visual arts. Perhaps music, for all its atomization into noise, is still a limited medium, and so a less disturbed sector of the art front than the making of images and objects. Some of Cone's performers are well known, some less so—including anonymous authors of characteristically absurd projects, such as the exhibition at the 1972 Venice Biennale of ten thousand hatching butterfly eggs (of which very few actually hatched). Cone's list of modernist culprits is taken entirely from what were once avant-gardes. But though these personages have the aura of avant-gardists, they do not constitute an avant-garde today, since they are extremely different in aim and calibre—for example, Christo, Carl Andre, César, and Chris Burden could no more be thought to belong to the same art movement than could Pollock, Shahn, and Calder. What they have in common for Cone is that they produce objects, conceptions, or, in the case of Burden, physical phenomena (self-mutilations) that belong to no recognized aesthetic medium, and whose status as art is consequently dubious. That art so lacks definition as to be capable of encompassing *anything* is one of Cone's major charges against the art produced in our time. "Works that adhere to no conventions of medium, organization, or expression and yet claim the honorific designation of art" have made the application of standards impossible, and left the question of what is art to be decided by each artist. This de-definition of art opens the door to charlatanism and allows the status of artists to be determined through public relations. Thus, in the name of art the public is subjected to varieties of counterfeits and to boredom, torture, and humiliation. Cone cites a work that requires crawling through tunnels; one thinks of others that call for squeezing between walls and walking barefoot in the dark. Worst of all, this has been going on so long it has ceased to be amusing.

Related to this lack of definition is the tendency in modern art to blur the distinction between art and reality. Here Cone touches on the Action tradition in modern art, ranging from the painter whose inspiration arises from his being "in" his canvas to "happenings"—with the inevitable reference to Rudolf Schwarzkogler, who in dealing with his body as an aesthetic object "sliced himself to a hero's death at twenty-nine." In pointing to the confusion generated by the artist who *acts*, Cone resorts to the neo-scholastic distinction between doing and making which was stressed forty years ago by Maritain. By viewing works of art as events and events as art, modernism aestheticizes reality, and deprives it of its moral dimension—the consciousness of right and wrong. It is as if photographs were continually mistaken for their subjects, and their subjects (a prison camp, say, or a landslide) were treated as a "set"—a habit that, according to Susan Sontag, in "On Photography," has overtaken man today. Cone, too, sees the confusion of art and reality as extending beyond the studio and the art gallery to produce ominous results in real life. "Most of our leaders," he writes, "tend to see public events as Works of Art . . . not as matters of life and death but as


IMMORDINO'S
FRESH TODAY HOT CROSS BUNS

scenarios." The breaking down of the barriers between art and life is undoubtedly one of the dominant impulses of the modernist revolution; it is at the root of the Impressionists' discarding of academic canons of composition, just as it is more explicitly responsible for the street demonstrations of the Futurists, the Dadaists, and the Surrealists. The degree to which new art succeeds in incorporating hitherto untouched segments of reality has often been the measure of its avant-gardism.

Cone's remedy for the subversion of experience by modernist art is simple, almost comically simple: do away with the words "art," "artist," "work of art." Once the ambiguous designation "art" has been lifted, the public will be able to see what individuals are actually doing, and call a spade a spade. Painters can then be as abstract or as representational as they choose, but they will be engaged in what all picture-makers *are* concerned with—making pictures, and not, for example, biting oneself before a camera. With the distinction between making and doing restored, it will be possible to know what to judge aesthetically and what to consider in moral terms. It is to be supposed that the loss of his immunity as an artist would make an Acconci or a Chris Burden liable to misdemeanor charges.

SOL LEWITT, who is now being given a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, is one of the personages whose acknowledgment as an artist Mr. Cone questions. Discussing "The Location of Points: 2 Wall Drawings," which was inscribed on a wall at Princeton by a team of assistants following instructions provided by LeWitt, Cone asks, "What, then, is LeWitt's medium?" Elsewhere in his paper, he suggests that the answer might be geometry. LeWitt's retrospective is not as devoid of objects as the "Location" piece. It includes painted metal grids, pen-and-ink drawings, chalk drawings on a black wall, book designs, and other tangible entities; those who are not inhibited from comparing museum objects with other kinds may find resemblances to meticulous chicken coops, hanging sets of cubbyholes, cube-shaped cartons on a stopped conveyor belt. Will these material manifestations of LeWitt's talent induce Cone to acknowledge that LeWitt is an artist? One is inclined to doubt it. LeWitt's basic units are the square and the cube; even where the surface is crisscrossed by lines that seem random, as in a white-on-black drawing, the lines are

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controlled by a grid of squares in the background. The logic of Cone's position requires him to insist that works in which, according to the MOMA press release, "the linear elements of a cube are explored in 122 eight-inch pieces, beginning with the basic three bars and concluding with 11 bars (12 being needed to complete the cube)" belong in a mathematics-seminar room, not in an art gallery. The fact that on occasion LeWitt materializes his Q.E.D.s hardly distinguishes him from other lecturers in geometry. New Yorkers may recall talks by Buckminster Fuller in which he manipulated an assembled tetrahedron to illustrate the formal composition of matter and the structural units of his geodesic dome. Nor is Cone likely to be reconciled to LeWitt as artist by the statement in the press release that the exhibition includes "71 variations of three stacked cubes in open and/or closed forms." He might respond with indignation to the claim that some LeWitts will instruct him in the "concept of enclosure, or the placing of one form within another"—a principle accessible to anyone who has watched a cat at mealtime.

The LeWitt retrospective, together with the literature promoting it, and "One Hundred Metronomes" provide a direct confrontation between the ex*isting art world and a radically skeptical* outsider determined to accept nothing that fails to make sense. Cone's pragmatic assault on modernism is not novel, and is weakened by a lack of close familiarity with the works he cites *and with* the processes of the current art world. For instance, in outlawing the word "art" as the primary source *of confusion* Cone *proposes to exempt* "the great museums of New York and Boston," and "countless university departments" as well. Yet these are the most powerful agents in bringing about the confusion he deplores. He seems unaware that LeWitt is accredited as an artist not by mistaken evaluations of his concepts or his sculptures and drawings but by art history, of which the museum is the embodiment and executive power. In the museum, the geometrical puzzles that LeWitt poses link him with the Constructivism of half a century ago; by a singular sorcery, this does not prevent him from being, by the testimony of the MOMA release, "a pioneer figure in the Minimalist movement of the 1960s . . . whose work has had a profound influence on the current generation of Conceptual and post-Conceptual artists." Indeed, all the artists whom Cone would like to reclassify out of art are beneficiaries of the magi-

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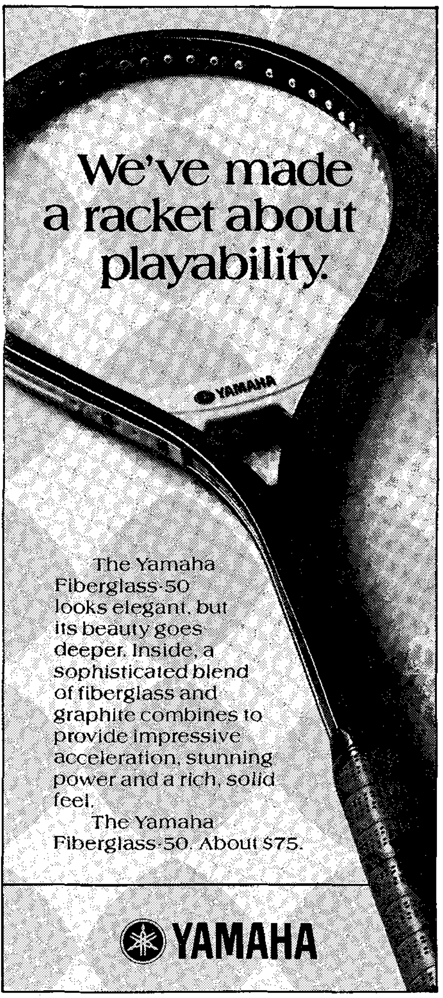

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cal power of the museum to continue to discover originality emblazoned with the authority of the past.

"One Hundred Metronomes," Cone tells us, is based upon clippings and other materials reporting weird doings in the name of art, which he has been collecting for some years. Such a dossier is more useful in building a case for prosecution than in conducting a serious investigation of a complex subject. In a manner typical of polemicists of anti-modernism (and of modernism, too), Cone does not discriminate between one piece of non-art or meta-art and another—between, for instance, Christo's grandly conceived, heroic curtain installation at Rifle Gap and a physically dangerous but uninteresting antic of Chris Burden. Yet, for all his critical limitations, Cone's uneasiness about the de-definition of art and the mixing of art and reality has a serious bearing on the developing situation of art. As art moves farther from its origins in the handicrafts, the possibility of objective standards of value is reduced to the vanishing point. Crafts, with their measurable skills, cannot be reconciled with the interests and practices of art in our time. The skills of the modern artist are the opposite of those of the craftsman: instead of acquiring techniques for producing classes of objects, the artist today perfects the means suited to his particular work. His technique—and, indeed, his self as an artist—tends to be his own creation. Moreover, in industrial society the decorative crafts have been converted into mass media. Only the pressure of new creations *against* art as it has been defined keeps art from merging with the media and allows works to survive for an interval as art. To maintain this pressure of de-definition has been the task of the avant-gardes. That avant-gardes have been accompanied by charlatanism and power tactics makes them no less indispensable. The post-modern world might supply Cone with fewer clippings but also with less art.

—HAROLD ROSENBERG

•

DALLAS—Jack M. Allen of Perryton, Texas, who assumed the 1977-78 presidency for Independent Petroleum Association of America in late October at the annual convention, stepped off with a statement condemning President Carter's and Speaker of the House Eugene O'Neil's railroading tactics in putting the administration energy bill through the U.S. House posthaste.—*Texas Oil Journal.*

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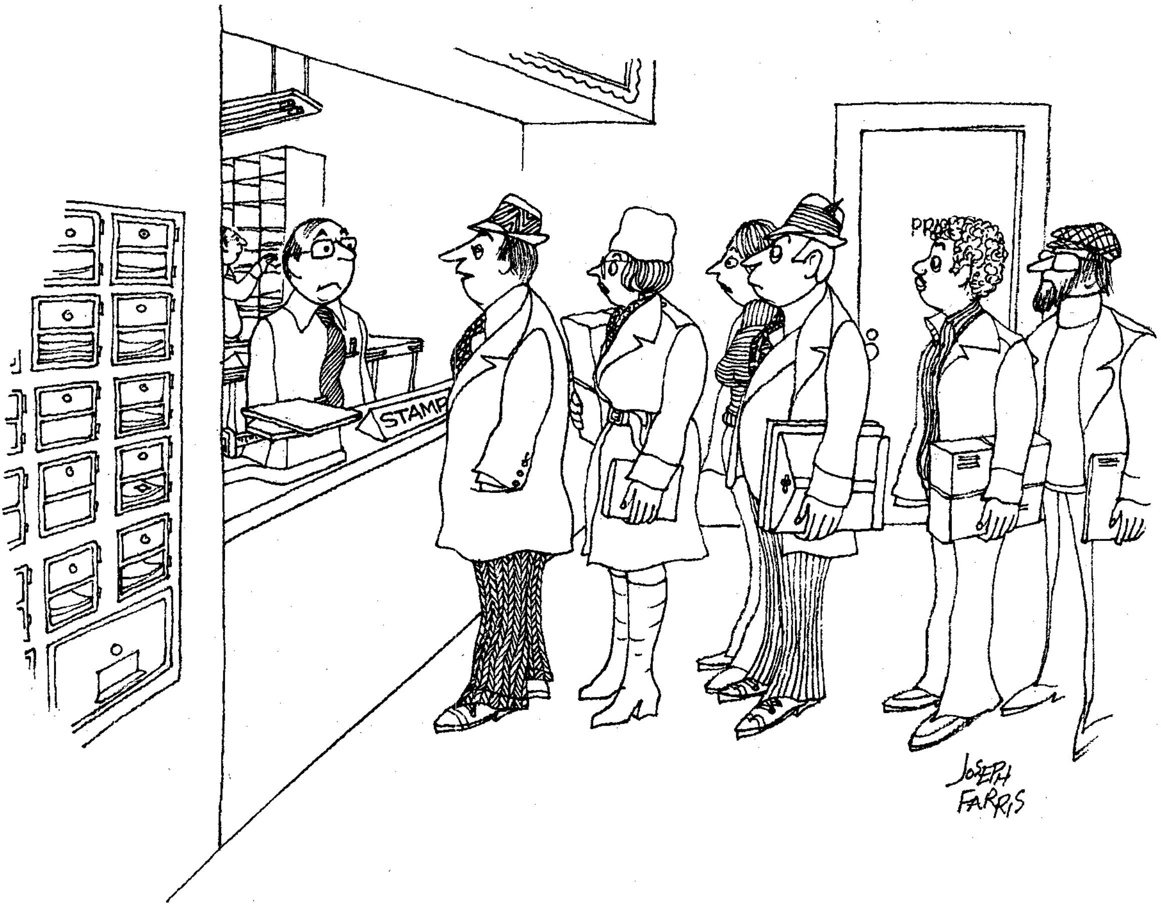
THE THEATRE

OFF BROADWAY

THE BAM Theatre Company, under Frank Dunlop's direction, opened its four-play season at the Brooklyn Academy last week with Bernard Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple" (it will run through February 19th), and I can say right off that George Rose's choleric and ironic General Burgoyne is the best and most interesting Gentleman Johnny I've ever seen. For all his wit (and Shaw has given him the plum part in the play), Burgoyne is a very angry man as he marks time in New Hampshire in 1777—angry at the inefficiency of the redcoats in New England, and even more so at the "enemies" in London, with their "jobbery and snobbery, incompetence and red tape," who neglect to send orders to General Howe, in New York, to meet him, thereby leaving him stranded, so to speak, to preside over this paltry hanging of a local patriot, who will thus become a martyr. Mr. Rose never allows the part to become a star turn; his General is a quiet and forthright gentleman—and, needless to say, a very funny one. He finds the pompous Major Swindon intolerable, and cuts him down at every opportunity, yet he deems Dick Dudgeon's contemptuous insult of George III to be at least worthy of consideration. It is Mr. Rose's performance that gives the show whatever focus it has—though Carole Shelley, as Judith Anderson, is clear and believable (and also funny) as we see her suppressed attraction to the wicked Dudgeon rising to the surface and being acknowledged when he allows himself to be mistakenly arrested as the Reverend Mr. Anderson and sent to the gallows.

For the rest, this is a broad and merry "Devil's Disciple," but not a particularly pointed one. Shaw must be taken seriously even when he is at his funniest—something that Mr. Rose and Miss Shelley never forget but that Mr. Dunlop occasionally seems to. The play is filled with Shaw's distrust of sentimentality and the Romantic movement, and with his feelings about being true to one's own nature. Yet Dick Dudgeon—the anti-heroic hero, the Devil's disciple himself, the embodiment of these feelings—makes entrances as flamboyant as the Vagabond King's, swaggering up onto his mother's kitchen table in the first act and swinging from the lintel of the Andersons' door in the second. Chris Sarandon improves in the part and clarifies it as the evening proceeds, but he never quite attains the strength it needs. Barnard Hughes, though, is quietly solid as Anderson, making credible the metamorphosis from clergyman to rebel soldier, and Margaret Hamilton is properly venomous as Dudgeon's mother. But Earl Boen, as Major Swindon, tries to outshout and top General Burgoyne to the point of insubordination. Mr. Dunlop is surely one of the most valuable directors around, as he proved with his productions of "Scapino," "Sherlock Holmes," "Habeas Corpus," and "The New York Idea," yet, for all the fun in his "Devil's Disciple," there is a lack of style, and the actors—good or so-so—never seem to perform as a company. Still, the setting holds firm in time and place, and Carl Toms' revolving scenery of log scaffolding is very effective.



"I want three one-cent stamps, two twos, one three, three fours, two fives, one six, one seven, two eights, one nine, one ten, two elevens, one thirteen, one fifteen, two eighteens . . ."

BY now, the South African dramatist Athol Fugard is as esteemed for his courage as he is for the plays he has written and presented, with mixed casts, at his own theatre in Port Elizabeth and has exported, at considerable risk to himself, to England and the United States. In the climactic scene of his "Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act," which opened last week as part of a double bill at the Manhattan Theatre Club, we see a naked young "colored" man (a man of mixed blood, that is, in the precise racial terminology of South Africa) and a naked middle-aged white woman, both rigid with fear and shock, in the sudden alternating glare and blackness of camera flashbulbs. They are lovers, who have been meeting after dark in a library in Noupoort, Cape Province; she is a librarian, and he is a school principal in a compound outside the town. A white woman has been spying on them and has reported them, and a white policeman has come to collect evidence and make an arrest under the Immorality Act, which deals with "sexual offenses between white persons and colored persons." At the start of the action, we see the couple gently embracing and talking, having just made love. She, a newcomer to her job and the town, was a virgin, we learn, when the affair began; he is a young man afire with intellectual curiosity. He has a wife and child, and he feels responsible for them—he cannot bear to leave them, or hurt them in any way—yet he will not leave his mistress. Their conversation is intimate, constantly shifting in mood and tone. Suddenly there is a commotion outside. The lights go up at stage left, and there, holding a dossier, stands a white policeman.

The play is, in a sense, about nakedness—about being undisguised in love and about being with no protection whatever in a land of racial danger—and it is an eloquent, poetic tragedy, as eloquent at times in its silences as in its words. Most important, it is about these two specific people, whom we come to know and care about as deeply as we did the displaced colored couple in "Boesman and Lena," the half brothers of mixed blood in "The Blood Knot," and the two blacks on the run in "Sizwe Banzi Is Dead," to name a number of Mr. Fugard's other plays. As a dramatist, he never stoops to propaganda; the characters he explores and presents so artfully and the situations they are in are persuasion enough. The performance, under Thomas Bullard's direction, is entirely worthy of the play. Robert Christian plays the colored man with great emotional power and variety, never missing an inflection of irony or humor; at the end, his humanity crushed by the arrest and its consequences, he is a tragic figure. As the librarian, Veronica Castang acts without any self-consciousness about her nakedness (as she did in "Life Class" a couple of years ago); at one point

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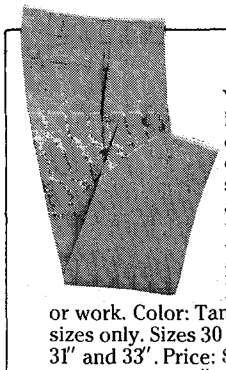

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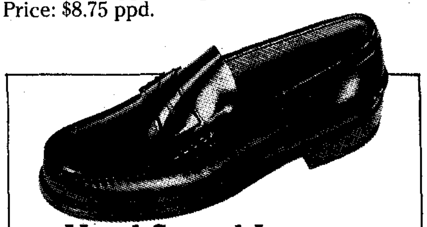

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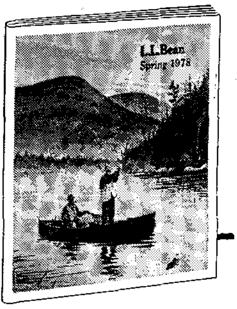

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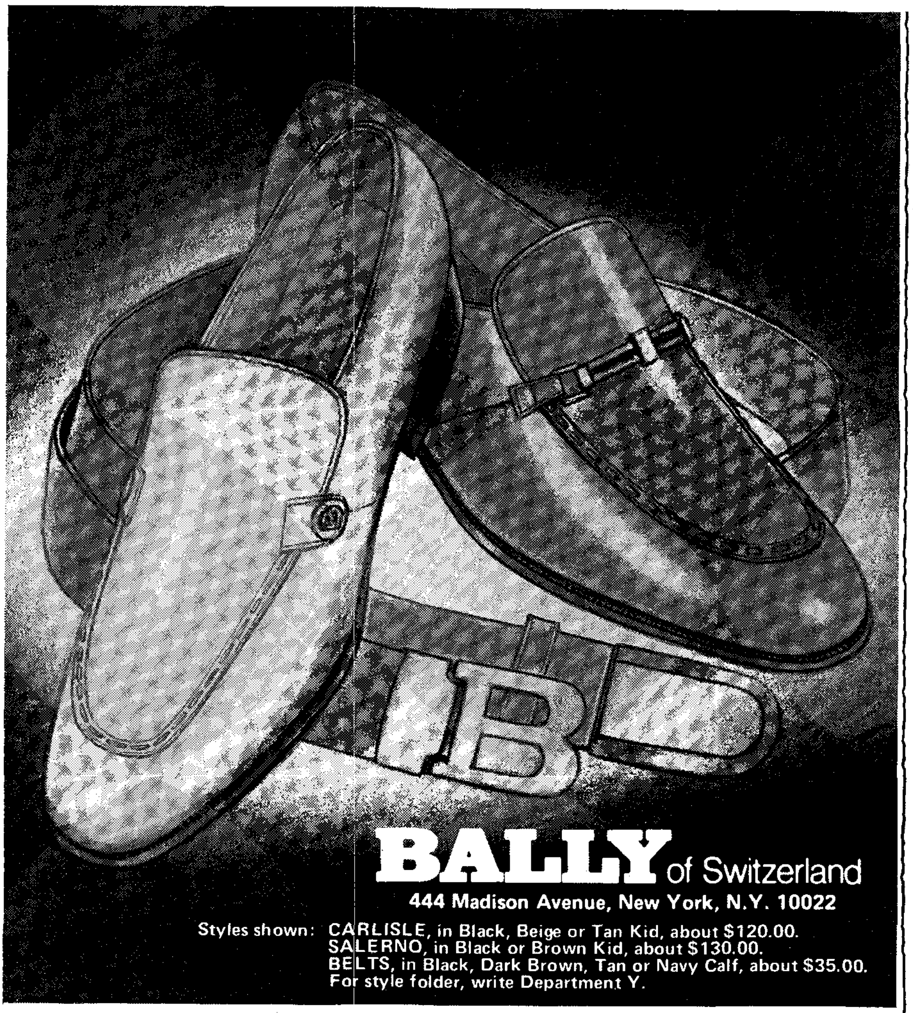

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she moves her hands over her body, which she knows is aging, with a wistful, innocent objectivity that is very affecting. John Vennema performs the policeman capably.

In Steve Wilmer's "Scenes from Soweto," the second half of the double bill, Mr. Christian plays a black South African mathematician at Oxford, who tries to stay clear of politics while away from home but who, when he returns to Johannesburg to take a job in an Anglo-American company, is sucked into the riots in the black township of Soweto and strangled by a white policeman. (The action is accompanied by projections of actual photographs of some of the events it describes.) Mr. Vennema plays all the whites the mathematician runs into. The hero starts out to be quite interesting—or, at least, Mr. Christian makes him so—and Mr. Vennema is persuasive enough, but the play soon dwindles into just another polemic.

—EDITH OLIVER

•

WAVING

In the backyard, by the stilled
oscillations of the cheap
metal fence defined
by the weight of children,
the small maple
waves in the first
gusts of a fall day.
Behind breath-frosted
glass, hearing far off
my child's cry, I
see this waving become
my father's thick arms.
He waves at the ballgame
where players swarm
at his call. One spits.
He waves from the nose
of a rowboat, drunk
with fish and ashamed.
He waves at the black
end of a treeless street
where my mother has turned
from the house, crying.
He waves on a little hill
above the playground,
his whistle shearing
over each knuckle
of asphalt. When I stop
running, out of breath,
he is still there, waving,
and I am waving, beating
the air with my arms,
bruised and afraid,
and there is no wind, only
the brilliant distance,
like a fence between us,
waving and waving.

—DAVE SMITH

U.S. JOURNAL: LOCKE, CALIF.

THE LAST CHINATOWN

I WAS not astonished to learn that the only Chinese town in California had been purchased by a Chinese investor from Hong Kong, doing business as Asian City Development, Inc. In America, nothing is unbelievable as long as it involves real estate. What I found astonishing, given the history of land development over the past couple of decades, is that the town—a tiny settlement on the Sacramento River called Locke—still exists, looking virtually the same as it did when the Chinese built it in 1915. Its main street—a hundred yards or so of ramshackle wooden buildings, with sloping second-story balconies extending over the sidewalk—still looks like an appropriate setting for a two-cowboy shootout. A hundred yards away, elderly Chinese in conical hats still bend over their gardens, tending their bok-choy crop. Locke's survival might seem even more astonishing in other parts of California than it does on the Sacramento Delta—the rich farmland south of the state capital where the Sacramento River splits around islands and overflows into sloughs and marshes on its way to San Francisco Bay. There is a lot on the Delta that seems to have escaped recent history. The atmosphere somehow seems more like southern Louisiana than northern California. The road winds along the river, on top of levees started a hundred years ago by Chinese laborers—past canals and drawbridges and flimsy-looking fishing camps and boat docks with names like Morgan's Landing and, now and then, a landowner's three-story Victorian house, with the oak alley that would be traditional along the Mississippi augmented by palm trees. The pear orchards that Chinese once tended as laborers or tenant farmers still extend for acres on either side of the river—they are tended now by Mexicans and Filipinos—but most of the Chinese communities along the river have gradually evaporated as Chinese left the Delta towns for Stockton or Sacramento or San Francisco. In Isleton, the main street of what was once Chinatown is mostly a silent row of boarded-up storefronts, with just about the only signs of life coming from a cardroom where Filipinos spend the afternoon playing lowball. Courtland's Chinatown burned down for the last time some years ago. In Walnut Grove, where the well-off whites once lived on the west bank of the Sacramento and the Chinese on the east, the well-off whites still live on the west bank and the east bank is neatly divided into separate sections for poorer whites, Filipinos, and Japanese. Only Locke remains intact—not just the section of a river town which Chinese were allowed to live in but a separate community, built by Chinese and still inhabited largely by people who hardly speak English.

As the last rural Chinatown in California, Locke is obviously an extraordinary historical artifact—although its being an artifact with human as well as architectural properties confronts those interested in preserving it with what one report called "some perplexing problems that almost defy solution." Locke is also, of course, real estate. The Chinese built their town in one corner of a pear-tree ranch owned by a man named George Locke—a corner that was included when the Locke estate put the ranch up for sale last year. Some concern about the intentions of the new owners surfaced in Sacramento County last August when the San Francisco *Journal* reprinted an article from a Hong Kong newspaper called the *South China Morning Post* which began chattily, "A Hong Kong couple, Mr. Ng Tor-tai and his wife, Fancy, have bought a town in the United States." The first phase of what the Ngs referred to as Asian City, the article said, would be construction of four hundred houses "of Chinese design," followed by "a Tin Hau Temple, a Big Buddha, and world fair-style pavilions representing Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Philippines, Hongkong and Thailand"—all shown on a sketch of the area drawn by Mrs. Ng. According to the article, Asian City would also have a floating restaurant on the Sacramento River, a shopping center, a hotel, a country club, and facilities for Dragon Boat Races. In November, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, in what must have been its first reaction ever to an item in the *South China Morning Post*, imposed a twelve-month building moratorium on the entire area.

A PLACE called Lockeport existed in 1912. It amounted to a bar and a boarding house and a gambling parlor that Tin Sin Chan and two other immigrants from the Chungshan district of Kwangtung Province ran to serve men who worked at a boat shed across the road, where vegetables were loaded onto the Southern Pacific steamboats that then travelled regularly between the capital and San Francisco. Three years later, when the Chinatown in Walnut Grove, just down the river, was destroyed by fire, Chinese who had come from the Sze Yup district remained to rebuild it but the Chungshan Chinese joined Tin Sin Chan and built their own community at what became known as Locke. It was during the time that people in the Delta still speak of as "the asparagus boom," when the need for farm labor brought in waves of men from the Orient—Chinese and Japanese and Filipinos and the Indians

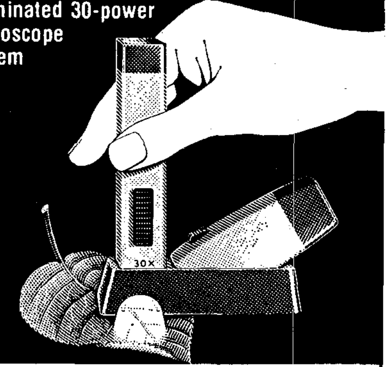
always referred to in rural California as Hindus. Locke was one of the places along the river where laborers could come for Chinese food or a room between jobs or a woman or a night of gambling.

Locke grew quickly into a town with a couple of hundred permanent residents—prospering from the blessings of not just asparagus but also Prohibition. As an unincorporated settlement without a police force, it was able to provide entertainment that was interrupted only occasionally by the county sheriff, who seemed to make periodic raids on gambling dens in much the same spirit that a United Fund solicitor makes annual calls on public-spirited corporations. The gambling dens were dominated by fan-tan and pai-gao, but they had an Occidental admixture of slot machines. Whites came to Locke to run speakeasies and bordellos. In the twenties, Locke reflected an odd mixture of Eastern and Western sin. The *River News* might report that "William Van Meter, 37, pool room owner of Locke," had been shot, probably fatally, by the woman he lived with ("He put me in the hospital two months ago and I put him there this time"), or it might report, in an item just below news of the lamb market, that "a war with the Hip Sings lined against the Bing Kongs may begin momentarily," because "the $15,000 demanded by the Bing Kongs from the Hip Sings for the death of members of the former tongs in Los Angeles has not been paid." In 1924, the *River News* reported that Sheriff Charles Ogle of Sacramento County had bluffed his way into an opium den by repeating the password ("It is a good friend") in Chinese, the sheriff having presumably found time in the midst of his other duties to master an accentless version of the Chungshan dialect.

"Within twenty years of the founding of the town," a U.C.L.A. geographer named Daniel D. Arreola wrote in a master's thesis on Locke, "some of the same factors that had contributed to Locke's early growth began to work against continued growth." The asparagus boom moved south to the San Joaquin Delta. Prohibition was repealed. The second-generation Chinese of Locke, having been given educations and aspirations beyond fieldwork, moved to the cities. Locke became known as a dying town—a place where a steadily diminishing number of retired Chinese farmworkers spent their days fishing or tending vegetable gardens or playing dominoes or staring at faded pictures of children who had long since moved to San Francisco or of wives who had never been brought from China. Most of the storefronts on Main Street became empty. To Caucasians in Sacramento and the Delta towns, Locke was known mainly for its single restaurant—a distinctly non-Oriental leftover from Prohibition days called Al the Wop's.

WHEN Sacramento County made a survey of Locke in 1968, one of the fears expressed by its residents was that the town might be taken over eventually by hippie elements. It was a time when people living in picturesque farm communities in Vermont or picturesque Spanish villages in New Mexico were discovering that dropouts inevitably drop in someplace else. In the seventies, Locke, which had always had a smattering of non-Chinese, gradually did acquire a significant white minority—described to me recently by someone with a precise California vocabulary as "not really dropouts, more like laid-backs." The white population of Locke includes a photographer and a poet and a cabinetmaker. Some of the white residents run some of the stores that have opened up in the past few years on Main Street as more and more sightseers stop by Locke—stores with names like the Beaverwood Trading Company and the Stoned Dragon Boutique—but they tend to run them at a pace that an aspiring American merchant prince would probably consider avocational. The one Chinese-owned business left on Main Street—the Yuen Chong market—is the only store that considers itself bound by regular business hours. White residents tend to be respectful of the elderly Chinese they live among, and apparently most of the Chinese ignore them politely. (When I asked one Chinese man recently how business was on Main Street, he replied, "We only have the one market.") The whites are becoming more difficult to ignore. In 1971, there were two; now there are close to twenty. In that period, the Chinese population has shrunk from eighty to fewer than sixty. A white takeover of Locke would not be willful, simply actuarial.

The whites who have proved most irritating to the Chinese in Locke in the past several years are not residents but tourists. When the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency took another survey, in 1975, to find out what Locke residents considered their most pressing needs, tourist control finished second only to fire control. Locke is only about an hour and a half from the Bay Area, which has so many people who will drive so far for so



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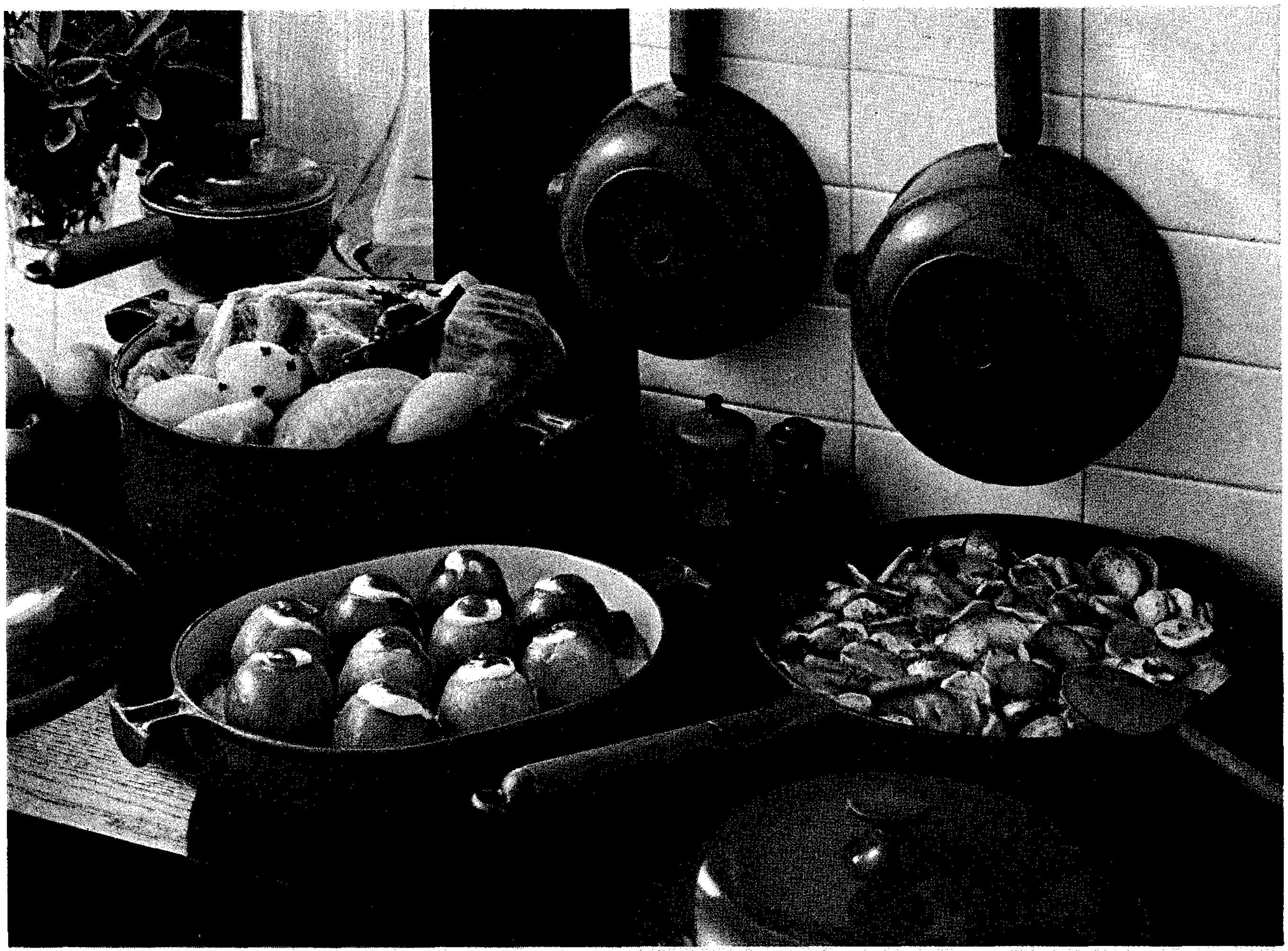

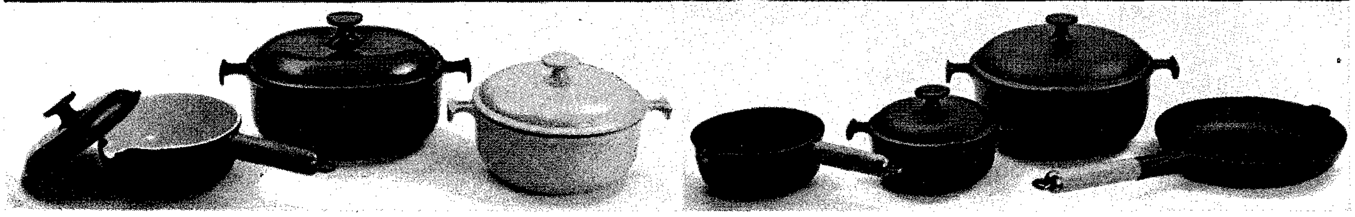

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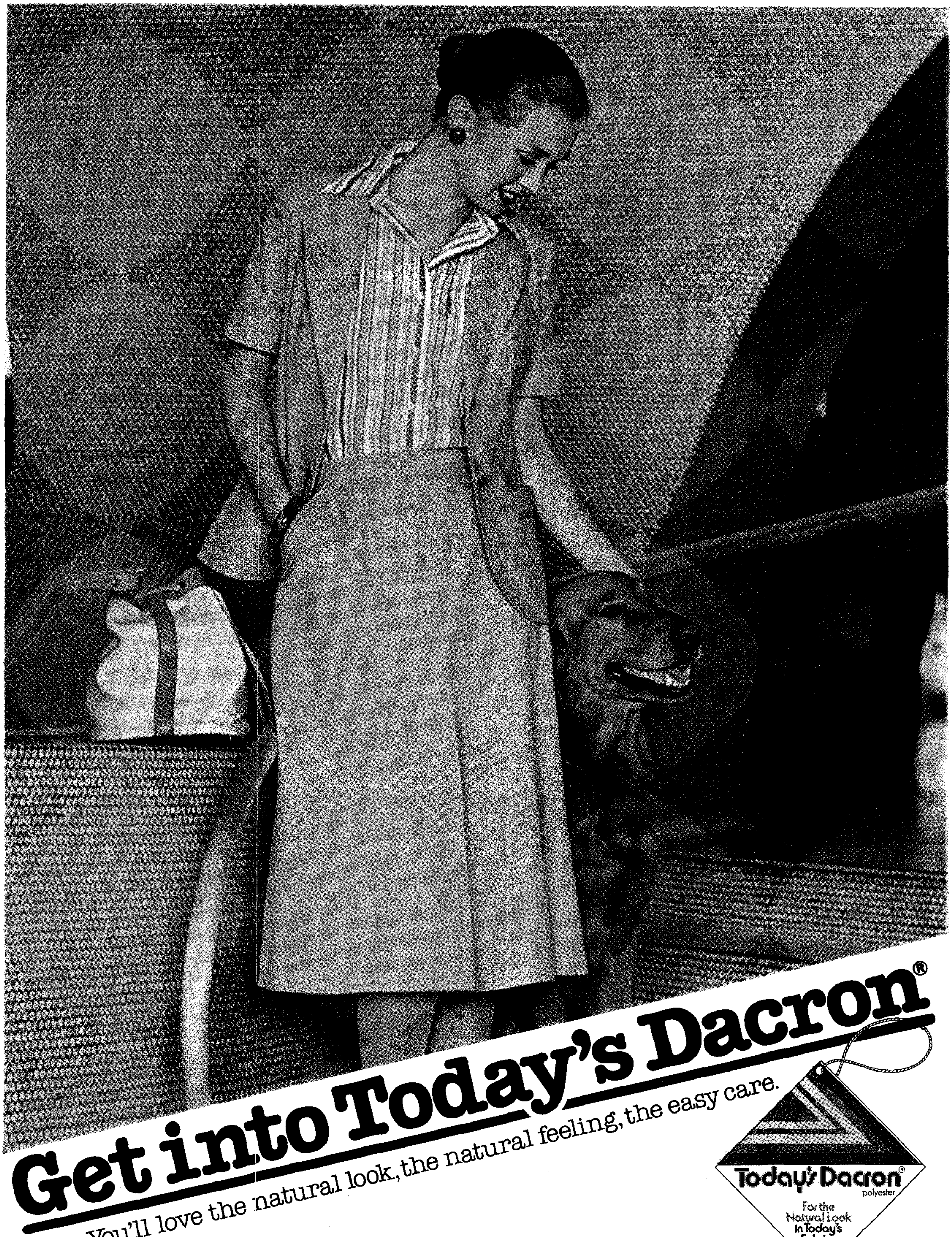
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little that attractions much less interesting than an Old West Chinese village can be crushed or transformed into industries within a summer. An interstate linkup and a new state park will eventually bring many more tourists, but even now on warm weekends Locke is jammed with visitors—some of whom, having consumed their fill of quaintness from the slanted boardwalks and wooden hitching posts of Main Street, wander into people's gardens or even into people's houses.

Planners and preservationists also started visiting Locke in increasing numbers as it became better known—talking about schemes for preserving the buildings and perhaps even preserving Locke as "a living Chinese community." Discussing how they happened to become involved, people who work for the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency tend to say that what is truly astonishing about Locke is that it has not burned down. Its houses are of wood—mostly old, unpainted wood—and a common method of cooking and heating is by kerosene stove. In addition to its other historical attractions, Locke could apparently serve as a museum of building-code violations. After some preliminary fire-prevention work, the housing agency did an elaborate study of Locke, concluding that some combination of government and foundation money should be used to purchase the town as a redevelopment area—a purchase that, given the state's power of condemnation and the county's power over building permits, could take place no matter who owns the Locke ranch. The state Parks and Recreation Department began to express some interest in developing Locke as a historical site—the prospect of acquisition having come at a time when the state, newly sensitive to ethnic history, was becoming interested in establishing some historical sites that, in the words of the current Parks and Recreation director, "show that someone was here besides Crocker and Stanford." There was talk of educating visitors to Locke about the contributions and tribulations of the Chinese in California; there was talk of enticing tourists away from Locke's houses and gardens by establishing a sort of combat zone of shops in the old loading shed that is separated from the town by the road along the river. The documents on Locke—the surveys and reports and petitions and studies—began to pile up.

NO sophisticated survey is needed to discover that most of the elderly Chinese in Locke simply want to be left in peace to live out their lives. "There's no doubt that ninety per cent of the people in Locke would like to see us out of there," I was told by Leo Goto, who is in charge of the Locke project for the housing agency. "I mean us, the state, the corporation—everyone. And if Locke wasn't going to change anyway, we wouldn't be there." Everyone accused of meddling in Locke denies harboring any intention of disturbing it. Even Asian City Development now says that the article in the *South China Morning Post* represents a dreadful misunderstanding of its intentions—although it may be that what was misunderstood was that the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors would have what amounted to an agent-in-place monitoring the Hong Kong press. The young man who now manages the Locke investment as well as some apartment houses Ng owns in San Francisco—Clarence Chu, who is Fancy Ng's brother—says that the corporation's real plan for Locke, which will be revealed this spring, is scrupulously protective of the Chinese residents and does not even emphasize tourism. The grandiose plans reported in Hong Kong, Chu says, amounted merely to some big talk to attract investors and a sort of Oriental brainstorming session.

If Ng had bought Locke fifteen years ago, when historical preservation was still considered a hobby for little old ladies instead of a concern for public officials, I suspect that nothing would have stood in the way of World's Fair pavilions and a shopping center except the necessity of making a short presentation to the County Board of Supervisors proving that Asian City could provide the Delta with some of the jobs lost when the vegetable canneries moved elsewhere. Ng, after all, bought the Locke property for several hundred thousand dollars cash, and is presumably in a position to spend a lot more developing it—being one of the Hong Kong businessmen who find themselves with what some people call "flight capital" and Clarence Chu describes succinctly as "too much money."

Five years ago, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency might have been welcomed as a savior from the wicked commercialism of private developers. The housing agency had done a successful "historic renovation" of the capital's waterfront, called Old Sacramento—adding at least Sacramento's fair share of exposed bricks and authentically restored nineteenth-century façades to the growing national inventory. Some residents of Locke, though—particularly white residents, who tend to be the strongest ad-

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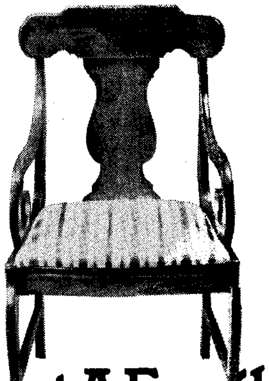

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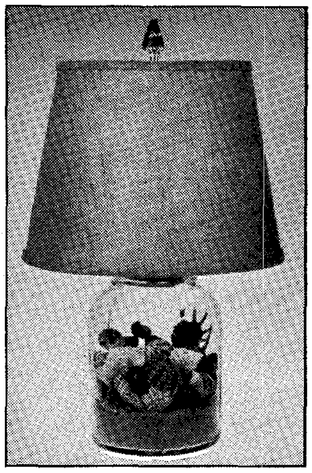

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vocates of Locke's being left alone—are almost as suspicious of the housing agency as they are of Asian City Development. These days, a lot of people around the country believe that—given the pressure of, say, making small projects larger *in order to* attract funding, or given simply the normal bureaucratic tendency for any agency to find ways to occupy itself—the most well-meaning planner may have difficulty leaving well enough alone. Planners plan, after all, and architects build buildings. The housing agency insists that its only recommendation so far is to preserve the buildings of Locke as they are while the future of the town is decided, but people in Locke point out that the option brought up at a public meeting recently included eighty-three units of public housing. The *Preservation News*, apparently assuming that an itch to do a slick historic restoration is what lurks in every planner's heart these days, has warned editorially that the people who want to preserve Locke are in danger of destroying its character. Representatives of the housing agency find themselves stating publicly again and again not merely that Locke should not be another Disneyland but that it should not be another Old Sacramento.

PEOPLE like Leo Goto agree that any policy decided on for Locke's future does bring up "perplexing problems." Both the housing agency and the corporation say they want Locke to remain a "living Chinese community," but, given the age of the Chinese residents, that goal seems to fly in the face of the laws of nature. The housing agency has investigated ways to give Locke "some sort of Chinese reason to exist"—arranging to have it serve as an agricultural-experimentation center for raising Chinese vegetables, for instance, or as a sort of way station for new Chinese immigrants—and the Ngs seem to have a similar scheme in mind to attract both Chinese population and Chinese investment. But are Chinese immigrants experimenting with bamboo shoots or producing soy sauce really part of the Delta Chinese history Locke is meant to symbolize? What if human needs and architectural preservation do not, as the planners say, constitute compatible uses? What if, for instance, the Chinese would rather live in eighty-three units of public housing than where they live now? If public money is invested to preserve Locke's houses, will whites in the future be prevented from living in them so that the town can be a sort of reservation for Chi-

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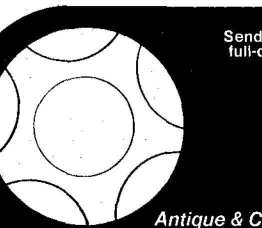

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nese? Everyone involved says that the residents of Locke should make the decisions that affect their lives, but should a decision involving a significant expenditure of public money be made, in effect, by the four or five Chinese in Locke who happen to speak the best English?

And where does Al the Wop's fit in? Al's could hardly be less Chinese or more honky-tonk—a bar whose walls are covered with business cards and bumper stickers and cute sayings, plus a back room that sells only steaks, served with French bread, peanut butter, and apricot jam. The tourists or ranchers who pour out of Al's with too many beers in them are always near the top of any list of complaints by Locke's Chinese. But Al's has been serving ranchers and tourists for more than fifty years, at approximately the same level of rowdiness. In a way, Al the Wop's is historically pure and it is the Chinese who have got out of step by growing too old for the traditional Locke Saturday night.

In some respects, the county and the state and the corporation seem to be working away as if each were the only one involved with Locke. There is some feeling, though, that what might emerge from all of the meetings and surveys and reports is an arrangement by which the county owns and runs the town of Locke and the corporation is permitted to do some development on the rest of the ranch—putting Ng, in a smaller sort of way, in the position of an orange-grove rancher in southern California who discovered in 1955 that he owned a five-motel-sized piece of property next to Disneyland. Then the Parks and Recreation Department could establish a historical site and tourists would be able to observe two sorts of Chinese experiences in California—the people who came with labor and the people who came with capital.

—CALVIN TRILLIN

•

Quietly, and thoroughly, the commission files are revealing one horror story after another.

Here's one, for instance, that reads like a text out of "Catch-22" or "1948."—*Washington Post.*

Or 1066.

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Omelets are a specialty with the recently married Callahan, who operates a system for mixing chemicals to make plastics at Perstorp.—*Northampton (Mass.) Hampshire Gazette.*

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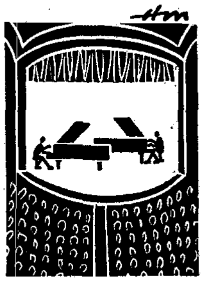
MUSICAL EVENTS

Playing in Earnest

ON Monday last week, Frederic Rzewski played his fifty-five-minute-long piano piece "The People United Will Never Be Defeated!" in Carnegie Recital Hall. Outside, snow was falling. I plowed home through the drifts thinking about Sicily and the sixth Settimana Internazionale in Palermo, where last I encountered Mr. Rzewski and his music. Other things that I planned to write about this week—the Met's revival of "Adriana Lecouvreur," the Philharmonic's Prospective Encounters concert in the Great Hall of Cooper Union, Harold C. Schonberg's Sunday *Times* article declaring that "Élitism, in the Arts, Is Good"—took shape against a Sicilian background. Snow is still falling, and I am tempted to linger in Sicily for a while.



The sixth Settimana, held during the last five days of 1968, consisted of seven concerts of contemporary music (most of the pieces were receiving their first performances), four bills of music theatre, an art show, and morning and afternoon screenings of "free cinema." Any chinks were filled with lectures and discussions. I also played hooky to attend a decent performance of "Simon Boccanegra" and as much as I could bear—an act and a half—of Giordano's rubbishy "Fedora," which were on at the Teatro Massimo. The program book—the fullest and most informative I have encountered at an international music festival—opened with a rather coy editorial explaining that the venerable Amici della Musica, Sicily's oldest concert society, had decided to open its portals to, as it were, a young friend in a Marcuse beard:

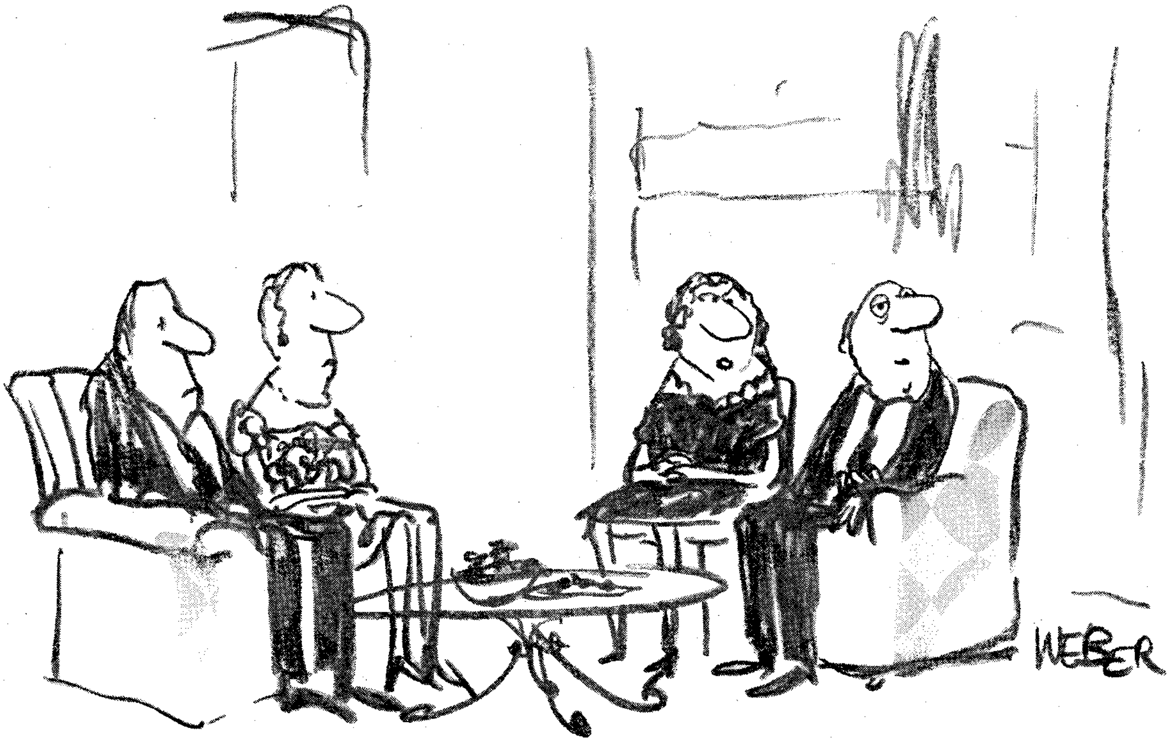
> Let us hope that during these days we will not often have Poe's tremendous adventure, discovering in the girl's body the features of a painted old hag. Yet even that comes within our scope: to go to exasperating extremes so as to rid the new culture of its inferior elements. All will flee from the ancient house; the maiden will be nude. The Settimana puts things to the practical test.

It began with Luigi Nono's "Contrappunto Dialettico alla Mente," a modern madrigal cycle fashioned after Adriano Banchieri's "Festino," for voices, naturalistic sounds (of the Venice fish market, water lapping in the lagoon, the bells of San Marco), and electronic modifications thereof—all on tape, and assembled by Nono's delicate, precise ear. The work was commissioned as Italian Radio's entry for the Italia prize (awarded for the best radio feature of the year) but then not entered lest, it was said, the finale—a setting of "Uncle Sam wants YOU nigger," from a manifesto of Black Women Enraged and the Harlem Progressive Labor Club—should offend Americans. It is a strong and beautiful composition. I sometimes wonder why orchestras when introducing a difficult score that needs much rehearsal time do not bill on the same program a tape piece—Nono's "La Fabbrica Illuminata" is another that deserves hearing—which needs no rehearsal time but only a balance test.

The music came to Palermo from all over Europe and from America. Each concert was planned to illustrate a particular aspect of the contemporary scene. No general picture emerged. There was—and is—no general tendency to be discerned in contemporary music. By 1968, the well-defined waves of pointillism, total serialization, huge-orchestra sound structures, and aleatory games had broken, leaving drenched composers to build as best they could amid the debris on the beach. Disciplines clashed. One of the most orderly and seductive compositions heard in Palermo was Morton Feldman's "False Relationships and the Extended Ending," for violin, cello, trombone, three pianos, and bells. (It is recorded on CRI SD 276.) At the last minute, the conductor who had prepared it, very carefully, was asked not to conduct the performance, since the composer felt his piece might be spoiled if it was given a precise rather than an approximate execution.

One element alone was fairly constant: vociferous, voluble student protest. All over Italy, that season, the opera houses had opened amid student and worker demonstrations; police had been at hand to insure that the bourgeoisie reached the theatres in safety, unmolested except by the flinging of vegetables and insults. In Palermo, the first music-theatre show was held up for an hour, until it was ascertained that the police reinforcements outside the building had been called off. There was no physical violence, none of the steel-helmeted brutality that in Hamburg, earlier in the month, had put an end to the première of Henze's "The Raft of the Medusa." But in the Sicilian town of Avola, shortly before, two strikers had been killed by the police, and so rallying cries of "Avola!" often rang out. During the rowdy arguments, Baron Francesco Agnello, the festival's organizer, acted as an adroit and sympathetic compere. Curious scene: Imagine holding the Met curtain for an hour on opening night while the management provided a microphone for protesters, defenders, the artists, and any members of the audience who wanted to join in to have their say, and Anthony Bliss delivered sane, conciliatory comment from a box. Of course, things are different here. Although the Met consumes much public money in the form of taxes unpaid on contributions to it, that indirect method of subsidy does not seem to give the public a sense of proprietorship or lead it to question as of right the way its money is being spent.

The questions in Palermo were whether so much money was being justly spent on an avant-garde festival when most Sicilians were poor, and whether publicly subsidized art for the élite could ever be justified in the world today. But protest sometimes shot off at tangents. When Gregory Markopoulos's film "Iliac Passion" was withdrawn from public screening (because Italian censorship disapproved of scenes of homosexual love on public view) and was shown instead to a select audience of critics and consenting adults, the students objected. That evening, Cornelius Cardew's "Two Books of Study for Pianists" was played, by an Italian duo, to an unplanned obbligato of "Film!" and "Markopoulos!" and went largely unheard except by a handful of listeners who clustered round the pianos. The première of Brian Ferneyhough's two-piano sonata was abandoned after a page or two. Only the Danish Wind Quintet, which had come from Copenhagen to introduce some of its compatriots' work, got a hearing: there was plainly no point barracking five youths who did not understand Italian. The more thoughtful students dissociated themselves from the racket over side issues. The main issues were important—and still are—but heated public discussion of them before an audience chiefly impatient to get on with the music generated more sound than sense. Deprived of their film, why should the students deprive themselves—and everyone else—of a concert, too? Because, someone retorted, that was the only way they could make their objections heard. Where were the workers, someone asked. No one asked what workers would make of Nono's or Cardew's music. While Russian musicians were struggling for the right to compose, perform, and hear avant-garde music, Western students were damning music written in an idiom not understood by the people.



"Sweetheart, have you left us?"

• •

It was stimulating to be among people who cared so keenly about music's role in society, salutary to have questions that must lurk in every critic's conscience forced into the open (even if they soon retreated unanswered), and therapeutic to attend, on New Year's Eve, a concert at which the tensions of the preceding days were resolved in mass music-making. The work was "Play," a collective improvisation in which "the rules, the scaffolding, have gradually been stripped away, to be replaced by the more fragile stuff of human trust," and it was put on by MEV, or Musica Elettronica Viva, a Rome-based ensemble of which Rzewski was a founder-member. The concert was given in the Politeama Garibaldi, a pleasantly pretentious building of 1874, crowned by a quadriga by Mario Rutelli, the sculptor of the outsize lyric lion on the steps of the Teatro Massimo. (Its companion the tragic lion is by another hand.) The Politeama has galleries, halls, and homes for learned societies, and at its heart a lofty auditorium designed in a sophisticated expansion of the Pompeian manner. In 1968, it was a little shabby, but, when the lights dimmed, the frescoed ceiling and the complicated details of colonnaded galleries became magical. If the ear was bored, the eye could find things to explore. Which is as it should be in a concert hall. "Play" began in dim light with a pretty girl sitting in a translucent, illuminated blow-up chair and clutching a contact microphone to her breast. Through loudspeakers encompassing the hall we heard her breathing; her heartbeat provided the steady pulse of the composition as electronic chitterings and then soft, tentative solos from a handful of instrumentalists around her stole into the sound. A trombonist prowled around the spaces of the hall, adding his improvisations from afar. The texture grew more complicated. It did seem as if a kind of spell were being cast, and people felt an impulse to add musical comments of their own. Since a program note stated that "the intervention of the listener is not treated as an intrusion, but is welcomed," listeners intervened—some gravely, some in jest, some to provide criticism in kind of the increasingly disorderly, loosely linked sound patterns that were now being strung out through the hall. Critics, as it happened, were the first to mount the platform itself, where there were a couple of pianos to spare and the less portable percussion—a selection of thunder sheets, big drums, a wind machine, a rack of tuned wine bottles—remained in place from a previous concert. Children joined them—and a few critics became children again. There is something irresistible about a thunder sheet. Soon everyone was at "play;" the piece had become a high-spirited free-for-all. An exuberant, extended scherzo led to a dying fall and then a pointillist coda as, one by one, the executants acknowledged that playtime was over. We had all been not just listening to but making music—well, music of a kind. And it was an exhilarating experience.

IN this month's Carnegie Hall program books, Herbert Kupferberg writes an essay on criticism, and says, "The chiefest of a critic's joys is to serve . . . as a discoverer, a yea-sayer, an enthusiast." Rzewski's "The People United Will Never Be Defeated!" had been discovered before. It was composed in 1975, for Ursula Oppens, and was first played by her at the Kennedy Center early in 1976; later that year she introduced it to New York; and it has been recorded by its composer on a Milanese label, Edizioni di Cultura Popolare. But for me it was a discovery at last week's recital, and I am enthusiastic about it. The work is a set of thirty-six variations on a Chilean song, "¡El Pueblo Unido Jamás Será Vencido!," by Sergio Ortega and the performing group Quilapayún—a song that, according to Rzewski, "is now familiar to millions of people in many countries as a symbol of the Chilean democratic movement" and is "a good example of the New Chilean Song, a form of music that flourished during the years of the Popular Unity Government." The theme, like that little waltz by Diabelli on which fifty composers wrote single variations and Beethoven wrote thirty-three, or the Paganini caprice and Handel theme on which Brahms wrote, respectively, twenty-eight variations and twenty-five variations and a fugue, has a catchy melody, sharp rhythmic outlines, and a firm, simple harmonic structure. And so, like them, it can provide the material for a very long set of variations, held together by more than a tune put through differing paces. The manner of building and

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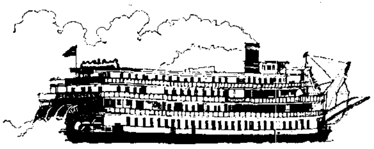

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of breaking down to build again is that of Beethoven in the Diabelli, the late bagatelles, and the last sonatas. The theme disintegrates into isolated notes scattered across the gamut of the keyboard, solidifies into a sequence of slow "frozen" chords, dissolves into an ecstasy of quiet trills, and is almost silenced during an elliptical episode when the music doesn't quite come through but comes in snatches, dim, then keen, then mute, "like fragments of an absent melody." Sometimes the theme bursts into long tendrils of lyrical cantilena; sometimes it is reduced to a few stern gestures. In some variations, the distinctive march rhythm of the opening, seeming to reiterate "the peo′ple [*rest*] uni′ted," is all that remains of it. There are slow funeral marches with heavy tread, purposeful, springy march sequences that suggest heads held high, dances, meditations, rhapsodies, toccatas, two-part inventions. The thirty-six variations fall into six groups of six, and the last of each group in some way recapitulates ideas from the previous five. The work, its composer says, tells a story that cannot be put into words. In musical terms, it is a story expertly told, which holds a listener's attention securely. The writing is that of a composer-pianist who has mastered late Beethoven through his mind and his fingers at once, and also knows the piano writing and piano thinking of Boulez and Stockhausen. Classical precedent suggests that the work will come to its climax in a fugue; instead, before the last variation Rzewski writes "cadenza," and at his recital he improvised a long, brilliant outburst of music. He is a very fine pianist, with big, strong, clear tone that never became clattery, with velocity, delicacy, an incisive command of rhythm, and a compelling personality. Horowitz and Sviatoslav Richter should look at "The People United." So should young pianists who, having learned the Diabelli and the Brahms-Paganini, now want an accessible twentieth-century work that puts their stamina and their technique to a comparable test.

Political music takes odd turns. Cardew, who showed one of the most curious and questing minds to be found in British music, has renounced complexity in favor of arranging, very simply, simple ditties, such as the Chinese song "Hatred in My Heart Sprouts a Hundredfold." Henze (in "We Come to the River") and David Blake (in "Toussaint") have cast their convictions in grand-opera form. Rzewski's "Coming Together" (1972), on a text by Sam Melville, an Attica inmate, is rebuked in Cardew's polemical volume "Stockhausen Serves Imperialism" ("The error of the piece is that it treats its subject in a subjective way"), but Cardew was the narrator at its London performance in 1976. "Coming Together" and the companion piece "Attica" are recorded by Opus One. Rzewski's declarative style of the early seventies can also be heard in three songs recorded by David Holloway (Folkways FTS 33903): the words carry the weight; the music does little more than give them an extra drive. The third of the songs, "Apolitical Intellectuals," is Ivesian. They are strong and direct, but Rzewski's music is stronger still when he works on a large scale. His big set of piano variations on a song, "No Place to Go But Around" (1974), intended for the Living Theatre production of "The Tower of Money," is a precursor of "The People United." (It is recorded by the composer on Finnadar SR 9011.) Late Beethoven, Liszt, and Busoni are the prominent influences.

"The People United" formed the first part of the Carnegie recital; after the intermission there were new variations on "No Place to Go," improvised *a due* by Rzewski on the piano and Richard Teitelbaum on a Moog synthesizer, and then improvisations *a tre* (Karl Hans Berger, on vibraphone, joined the ensemble) on a tricky little diatonic tune. In the first set, the Moog added background noises, mystic echoes, a voice in descant, a sonic storm. In both sets, Rzewski's collaborators showed themselves to be composers so much less creative than he is that the main interest was in hearing him take up their rather commonplace contributions to make something arresting of them. His skill along those lines I had already discovered at the Palermo "Play" when, from one of the spare pianos, I tossed a sow's ear in C major into the melee and he caught it and, at another piano, spun it into something wonderful.

THE Philharmonic's Prospective Encounters are this season reduced to two and are conducted by Gunther Schuller. His laudable aim is to bring to New Yorkers the work of composers from other parts of the country. His first program consisted of five short pieces: three of them had had their first performances in New England; two were by composers who live in Berkeley; one came from Sweden. Whether by chance or by design, they were all eventful scores, sequences of colorful incidents and striking gestures, not—at any rate, not noticeably—of connected discourse. It was an evening of woodwind virtuosity: Stanley Drucker shone in Olly Wilson's "Echoes," for clarinet and two-track tape; the flutist Stephanie Jutt was captivating in David Stock's "Scat" and William Thomas McKinley's "Paintings No. 2." Lynne Webber was the accomplished scat singer. None of the works calls for special comment but none was dull. It was an agreeable evening, and Mr. Schuller, a conductor who can be trusted to convey the spirit of a piece even when the execution of some of its details may be less than meticulous, made listeners feel they had come for enjoyment rather than instruction. Unhappy, and with reason, about the usual form of question time afterward ("Why don't you write tunes?"), he tried a new idea—a gathering of a few composers at the foot of the platform to discuss the works played and "problems in general." His intention, "to create the ambience such as you have in a Parisian café after a concert," was not fulfilled; in the Great Hall it hardly could be. New York concert halls lack cafés where large numbers can congregate to talk. (In passing, let me throw in a lament about Carnegie Hall's once pleasant but now lugubrious café, newly decorated in bordello-parlor taste, with dark-green flock walls, mirrors, gilding, and shrouded lamps. Some benefactor please donate a few gallons of whitewash to the hall.) Perhaps near Cooper Union there is a real café that could be wired for sound so that after a concert an audience could gather and eavesdrop on stimulating conversation; in the Union there was nothing to eat, nothing to drink but water (and a long line for that). But there was a table set with nourishing fare for sale in the form of CRI recordings (including Wilson's "Echoes," on SD 367), and that was good.

"ADRIANA LECOUVREUR," in the words of Grove, "is a work of decided charm and accomplishment." It is carefully composed, unexacting, unimportant, and enjoyable when as well sung as in the current Met revival. Essentially, the piece is an opéra comique skillfully expanded to fill a big house: the Prince de Bouillon and the Abbé de Chazeuil are Le Dancaïre and Remendado, from "Carmen," in new costumes; Frasquita and Mercédès have become actresses at the Comédie-Française. At the Met, Montserrat Caballé made such a meal of the heroine's two arias that they lost any impetus, but otherwise her singing was graceful, touching, and dis-

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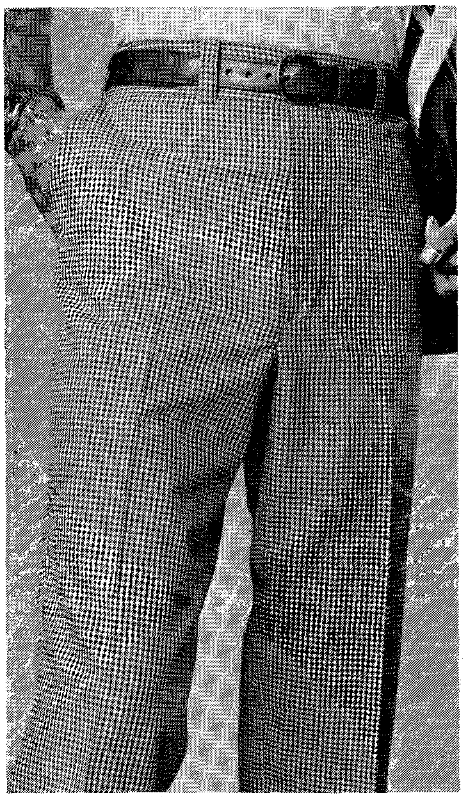

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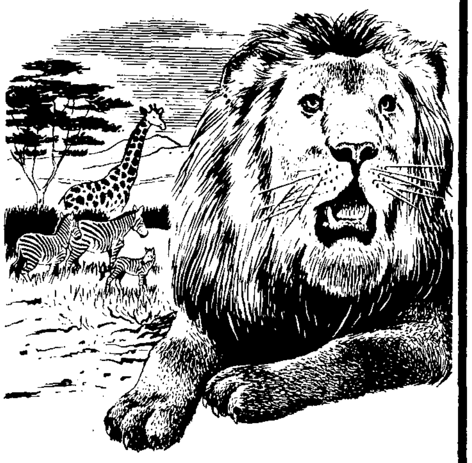

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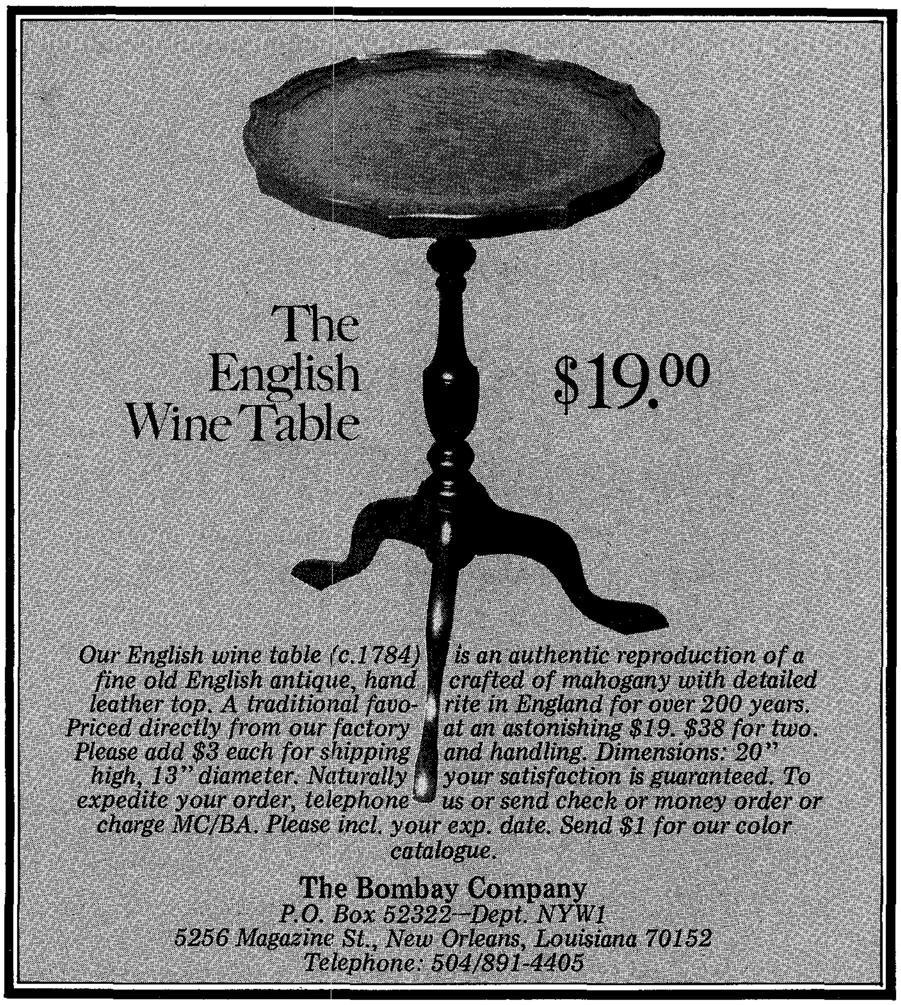
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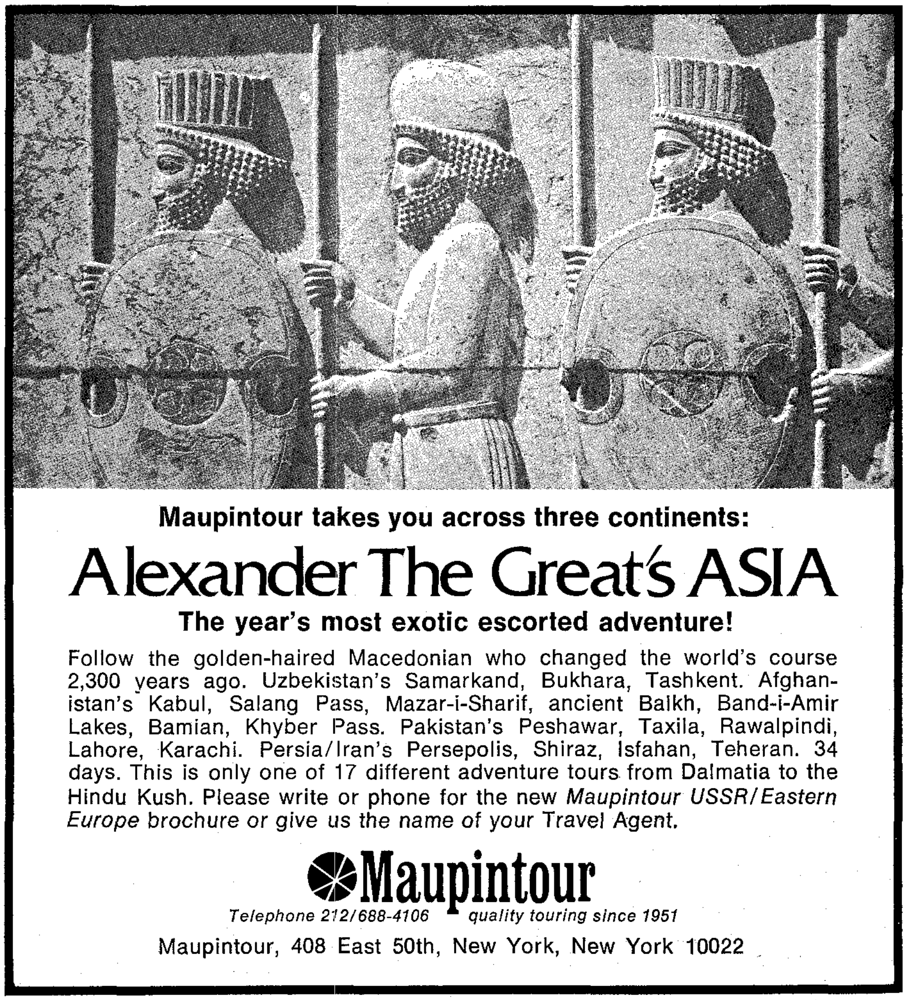
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tinguished by many of the ravishing, finely spun, tellingly projected pianissimi for which she is celebrated. José Carreras, as Maurice de Saxe, sang fluently and ardently. He looked unpatrician, and almost unseemly young to be squabbled over to the death by two mature, powerful women: Fiorenza Cossotto was the forceful Princesse de Bouillon. Louis Quilico sang and played Michonnet with apt sentiment. Jesús López-Cobos, conducting, accompanied his cast in glowing orchestral colors.

Jon Vickers has returned to "Otello" in top form, giving what is perhaps his most lyrical, most *sung* performance yet of a role he has always declaimed with uncommon power, intensity, and poetic passion. Katia Ricciarelli was an affecting Desdemona, serious in intention, subtle and musical, not always limpid in timbre yet more satisfying than those who are sweeter in voice but not alert to the shades of Verdi's music. Cornell MacNeil was an impressive Iago. During an intermission quiz on one of Texaco's Saturday-afternoon Met broadcasts, it transpired that the final lines of Iago's Credo—"La Morte è il Nulla, È vecchia fola il Ciel"—were lifted by Boito from the climax of an aria he had written eight years earlier for Alvise, in Ponchielli's "La Gioconda;" the aria appears in early, unrevised scores of that piece. The fact, which seems so far to have escaped Verdian scholarship, is an odd one, for the Credo played an important part in persuading Verdi to compose "Otello;" when it reached him, he declared it to be "most powerful and wholly Shakespearean." It was a peace offering from Boito after a disagreement. Boito took a chance: if Verdi had recognized lines already set—very emphatically—by Ponchielli, might he not have thrown them straight back at the poet? —ANDREW PORTER

•

> The young actress is majoring in English and would prefer to devote all her time to acting rather than college.
>
> Like teen-agers everywhere, Valerie lives in blue jeans, sneakers and sweatshirts. One favorite is a football jersey decorated with a skull and crossbones.
>
> Her father and brothers is based on two interlocking staples requiring two separate motions to unlatch the cover, or, to simply rip it apart, a pressure of at least five pounds.

—*Atlanta Journal.*

Please! Her father and brothers "are" based. Not "is."

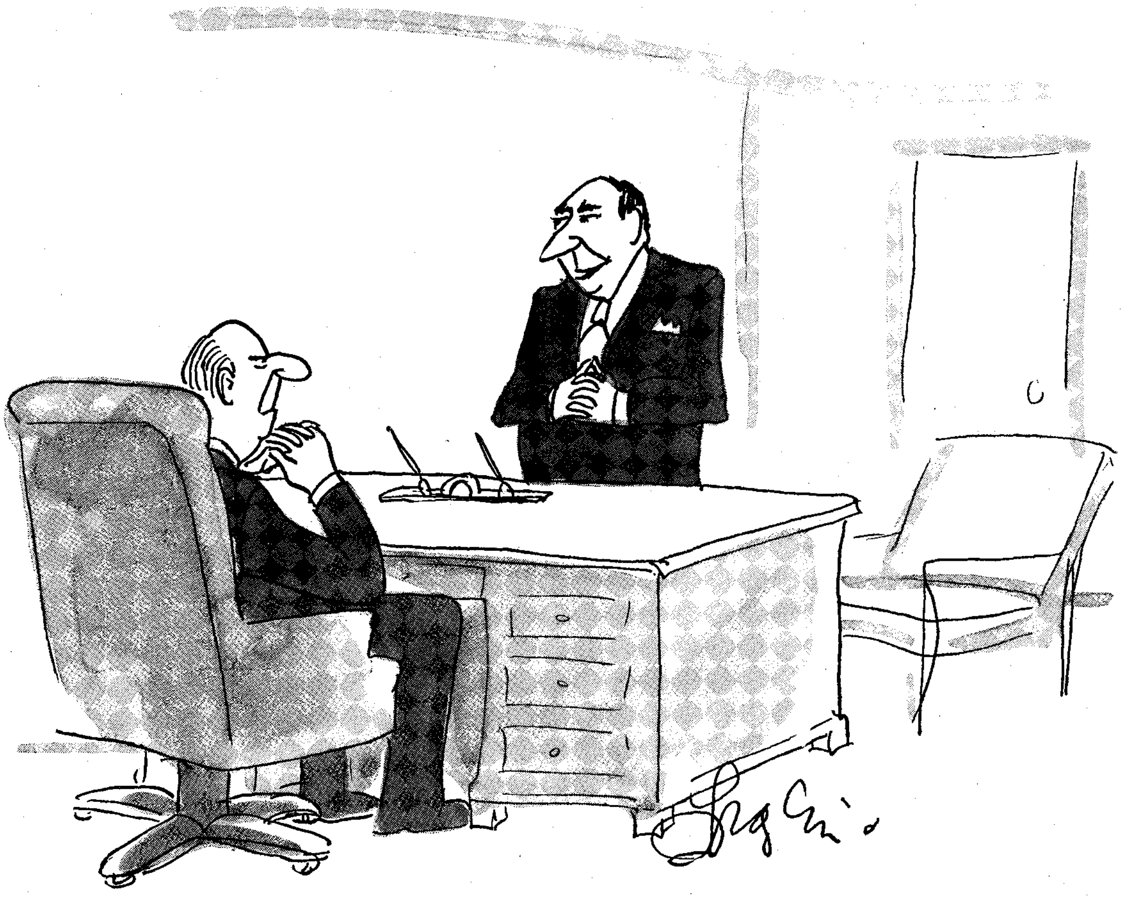
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Mythologizing the Sixties

Jane Fonda isn't playing a character in "Coming Home," she's playing an abstraction—a woman being radicalized. The time is 1968, the place is Los Angeles, and she's Sally Hyde, the proper, repressed wife of a hawkish Marine captain (Bruce Dern). Sally has been married for several years but has no children and nothing to do after her husband leaves for Vietnam, so she volunteers for work in the veterans hospital. On the day she signs up, she crashes into Luke (Jon Voight), who was an athlete when she knew him in high school and is now a paraplegic in a rage of helplessness. She discovers that the men injured in Vietnam are embittered by neglect, and that the other officers' wives, frozen-faced, sitting in their club all groomed and primped, don't want to know about it. As she works among the men, her identification shifts away from the idle-class women. She trades her sexless, crisply laundered clothes for T-shirts and jeans; she stops straightening her hair and lets it frizz up and tangle. Dramatists have always had a terrible time showing their characters "growing," and have usually had to resort to speeches announcing the interior changes; movies can spread the transformation, more novelistically, over a period of months or years. Sally Hyde gradually (and entertainingly) loses her inhibitions, but she develops only to the level of doctrinaire awareness which has been reached by the people who put "Coming Home" together, and this means that the character has a hollow tone—the same inauthenticity that the home-front heroines had in Second World War movies. Fonda develops that sorrowing-woman smile. The other characters are playing abstractions, too. Voight, round-faced and blond-bearded, is like a Kris Kristofferson who studied acting. He handles the transition from rage to boyish romantic hopes with star magnetism, and he gives his scenes a sexual undercurrent that may help put the movie over at the box office. But his role (with scenes that appear to have been suggested by actions of the paraplegic anti-war activist Ron Kovic) could be a parody of the new sanctimoniousness. Luke is a feeling human being, gentle and firm—stuffed with grand compassion. He embraces the distressed and comforts them with thoughts such as "You have enough ghosts to carry around." The measure of Voight's stature as an actor is that he very nearly gets by with his pontifical lines. Sally's friend Vi (Penelope Milford) is a miniskirted version of the smart, knowing, heart-of-gold working girl of thirties movies. She wises us up with her social perceptions; she explains that she went back where her home used to be but "they tore down my past and built a shopping center." Her salty, pithy, neo-Odetsian dialogue carries the label "gallant proletarian." We may not have had other movies with so much remorse about the Vietnam war, but we've been here before.

"Coming Home" started out to be about how the Vietnam war changed Americans, and turned into a movie about a woman married to a hawk who has her first orgasm when she goes to bed with a paraplegic. Sally Hyde's hospital collision with Luke is actually the only strong dramatic sequence, and the porny romanticism of their affair has a morbid kick to it. The musical prelude to the sex is reverential—moviemakers haven't found a slicker way of combining purity and eroticism since Marlene Dietrich unknowingly married a runaway monk (Charles Boyer). Viewers could go on fantasizing about this bedroom scene, except that Sally announces the obvious: "That's never happened to me before."

The politics of the film are extremely naïve, and possibly disingenuous. "Coming Home" doesn't oppose the Vietnam war on political grounds. The film embodies a pure-pacifist attitude toward Vietnam: the war is condemned on the basis that our soldiers are maimed and killed in it. Except for a sex scene or two, "Coming Home" is the sort of film a Protestant church group might put out—blandly humanitarian. Though it was shot by Haskell Wexler, a wizard of fast-moving strong graphics, it has a Waspy glaze to it—a soft, pastel innocuousness, as if all those involved were so concerned to get the message across without offending anyone that they fogged themselves in. Jane Fonda's face seems a little



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vague and pasty, as if she didn't want to stand out too much; her features seem to have disappeared. She's trying to act without her usual snap, and the result is so unsure she comes flutteringly close to a Norma Shearer performance.

The picture has a peculiar, anticipatory tension: you wait so long for something to happen you're ready to jump out of your skin. At first, it seems that the director, Hal Ashby, just has a drifting, dawdling approach to getting under way. Then you realize that this amorphous, inappropriately dreamy movie reflects Ashby's approach to the subject—maybe to any subject now. A former editor, Ashby is generally referred to as a meticulous craftsman; he took more than four months to shoot "Coming Home" and then eight months to supervise the cutting. Can it be that it's so sloppily made because he took so long over it? He plans in the sense of wanting to have enough to edit, and then he has too much. He must get overwhelmed by choices, and so far inside whatever he's shot that he loses the spine of the story. Ashby's two best-known films, "The Last Detail" and "Shampoo," had tightly structured scripts by Robert Towne, and Ashby, working within trim shooting schedules, stayed with those scripts. But he had greater control of his next picture, "Bound for Glory," and he and his editor, Robert C. Jones, added explicit, messagey scenes and extended the film until it meandered into shapelessness. The "Coming Home" project, initiated by Jane Fonda, began with a script by Nancy Dowd. When John Schlesinger was hired as director, he brought in Waldo Salt for a rewrite, and the Dowd script was mostly discarded. Then Schlesinger left the project, and when Ashby was hired he brought in his former editor, Robert C. Jones, who gets his first credit as a writer. The script that emerged from all this labor and God knows how many conferences is a mixture of undeveloped themes, and is so thinly textured that Ashby has filled in the dead spaces by throwing a blanket of rock songs over everything. (It's disconcerting to hear words like "strawberry fields forever" when you're trying to listen to what people are saying to each other.) The music isn't used for a strong beat or for excitement; it's more like a deliberate distraction, as if Ashby had got bored with the movie and wanted to hear what was going on in the next room.

Ashby's mood scenes can be very personal and touching; a sequence with Luke on the hospital basketball court telling Sally that he's being discharged from the place and Sally on the other side of the fence telling him that she's going to Hong Kong to see her husband does everything it needs to do and more—the feelings spill over, and stay with us. The whole picture is evocative of that messy time; it's permeated with free-floating anxiety, and Luke's stricken eyes serve as an emblem of the country's guilty confusion. "Coming Home" idles, it goes from scene to scene intuitively, romantically, until Sally's visit to Hong Kong; after that the cutting is often like a door slamming in our faces, and, without any dramatic preparation, there's bam-pow crosscutting between simultaneous events. In one sequence, Vi's despondent younger brother Bill (Robert Carradine) is having a fit of depression at the hospital, and Luke, having been on the phone with him, realizes the condition the boy is in and rushes to his aid. We see Luke wheeling himself to his car, folding up his wheelchair and driving off, and then arriving at the hospital and racing through the ward. But in between we see the paraplegics at the hospital staring at Bill and halfheartedly calling out to him, instead of spinning down the corridor to get help. One's time sense is violated; movie crosscutting was more highly developed than this in D. W. Griffith's day. The plot device of having Luke and Sally under F.B.I. surveillance is introduced at such an unstrategic moment that we half expect the F.B.I. men to burst in on their big love scene and beat Luke up. The captain returns from the war limping from a leg wound—ignobly received—and overnight his limp is gone. And what is Sally doing in the scene in which she stands holding out her arms to her husband? Every time there's a cut to her, obediently playing statue, we can practically hear the director thinking, Time stands still; this moment is an eternity. Bad moments are the real eternity.

What the film shows us goes against the grain of what it asks us to accept. The captain is such a charmless, reactionary stiff that when he comes home and Sally says she loves him, we don't believe her. With Bruce Dern in the role, Captain Hyde—who is supposed to be driven mad by the war—looks buggy-eyed and crazily distracted even before he goes to Vietnam; when the war deranges him, who can tell the difference? It's a fatally wrong piece of casting. Everything to do with Hyde is false, creepy, awful—he's like a psychotic Andy Gump. We feel no regret over anything that happens to him; the director has so little imaginative sympathy for a war supporter like Hyde that we don't feel Hyde's bewilderment at the ugliness of what his men have been doing. *He* doesn't seem a casualty of war.

At the beginning, we see Sally's open eyes while she's enduring intercourse with her husband. Later, we watch her face during her orgasm with Luke; this scene is the dramatic center of the movie. The question in the viewer's mind is, What will she feel when her husband comes home and they go to bed? Will she respond, and, if she does, how will he react? The psychological structure of the situation practically demands that he discover her infidelity by the sexual change in her. His attitude would then help determine whether the marriage will become a real one or will end. Instead, he finds out by means of the F.B.I. eavesdroppers; we never learn how he would react to the new, responsive Sally, and Ashby has no ending—just a lot of cutting back and forth.

Allowing for the differences in the wars, "Coming Home" may be the post-Vietnam equivalent of the post-Second World War movie "The Best Years of Our Lives," which also dealt with returning veterans in smooth, popular terms. Maybe, considering the squalor and disruptiveness of the Vietnam war, we can't expect much more than this depoliticized, melodramatic elegy with shame spreading in the sunshine. There's a pettiness of spirit here. People are judged too easily, and by class. Why are the other officers' wives shown as so coolly indifferent to the conditions in the veterans hospital? Mightn't some of them have been so insulated by their own lack of experience or so lonely and fearful of what could happen to their husbands that they dreaded the thought of the hospital? (And were there no officers among the seriously wounded?) There's a strong element of self-admiration in the film's anti-Vietnam attitudes. It's not enough that Hyde is wrong about the war; he's got to be a lousy lover, too, while the good war protester Luke—paraplegic though he may be—is so life-affirming that he brings Sally Hyde to life. Are liberals really such great lovers?

—PAULINE KAEL

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BOSTON (AP)—Doctors say an unusual flu-like illness could break out next summer among people who swim in ponds near pastures in rural western Massachusetts.—*Bangor (Maine) Daily News.*

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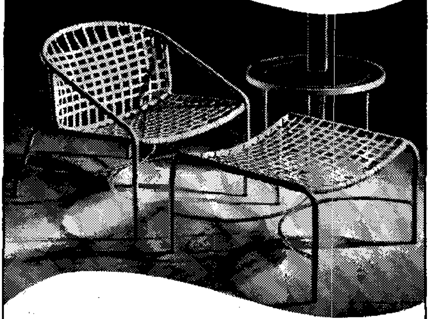

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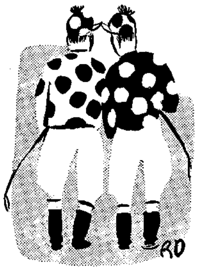

THEY dug Aqueduct out of the snow late last week, and 18,677 eager patrons who had missed a couple of days of action early in the week came out on Saturday to see the fourth running of the Lucky Draw Stakes. It was held in two divisions, and there was a whirlwind finish in each of them. Joyfull Ruler won the first division, coming up with a great rush through the stretch to beat Reassessment, with Crooked Tree third. The second division was a thriller. House of Erin, ridden by Hernandez, followed the pace of Mr. Reggai, a fifty-to-one shot, for most of the mile and a sixteenth, and ran him down in the stretch. Mr. Reggai fell back to third, and Just Right Classi finished second. The crowd bet $2,899,145 during the afternoon.

SANTA ANITA—and, from all accounts, most of California—is having a terrible time with the weather. Heavy rains and a muddy track have upset form and made training horses very difficult. What they need out there is another superior mudder, like Mrs. Marjorie Lindheimer Everett's Stardust Mel, who swept everything before him several years ago. In the recent polling at Santa Anita, Los Angeles racegoers overwhelmingly voted the George Woolf Award, which always goes to the top jockey at the meeting, to Darrel McHargue, the twenty-three-year-old race rider from Oklahoma, who had victories with Mr. Redoy in the rich Charles H. Strub Stakes and with Ancient Title in the San Pasqual Handicap. George Woolf, the Willie Shoemaker of his day, was killed in a racing accident in 1946. He was nicknamed the Iceman, because of his coolness. The award is a replica of a statue of him that stands in the paddock at Santa Anita. In another poll, members of the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association voted Mrs. Connie Ring's Crystal Water the top California horse for the second time.

During a break in the rains, Ancient Title returned to the races at Santa Anita, and the eight-year-old gelding must have been feeling his oats, for he popped out of the starting gate in the San Pasqual and was never headed

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in the mile and a sixteenth. He finished in 1:40⅕—a new track record—winning by a length and a half from Mark's Place. As you know, the San Pasqual is a top prep race for the Santa Anita Handicap, which comes up on March 5th, and Ancient Title will have quite a following for the Big 'Cap this year, even though he hasn't been very lucky in it in the past—he has twice finished second, beaten four and a half lengths by Prince Dantan in 1974 and a nose by Royal Glint in 1976. Right now he's eight-to-one in the Caliente Future Book on the race. He might even go to the post the favorite—Seattle Slew is the present choice, at three-to-one, but I wonder if Slew isn't going to skip this one, too.

If you want to bet on a hundred-to-one shot, you can find what you're looking for in the Caliente Future Book. Back when John Alessio had the book, he always had a couple of thousand-to-one shots in it for daring two-dollar bettors who wanted a thrill. None of them ever won, as far as I can remember. By the way, if you know someone in San Diego, you could get a bet on, because San Diego is just a hop, skip, and a jump across the border from Caliente. I shall be interested in the Caliente Future Book on the Kentucky Derby, which should be out shortly.

OAKLAWN PARK, at Hot Springs, Arkansas, opened on February 3rd with a record first-day crowd and handle. Six days later, snow moved in and caused the cancellation of the card. Charles Cella, the head of Oaklawn, has a most attractive track. He will have the Racing Festival of the South again this year at the end of the meeting, presenting seven stakes in as many days, among them four $100,000-added events: the Fantasy, for three-year-old fillies, at a mile and a sixteenth, on March 25th; the Apple Blossom Handicap, on March 29th; the Oaklawn Handicap, on March 31st; and the Arkansas Derby, on April 1st.

—AUDAX MINOR

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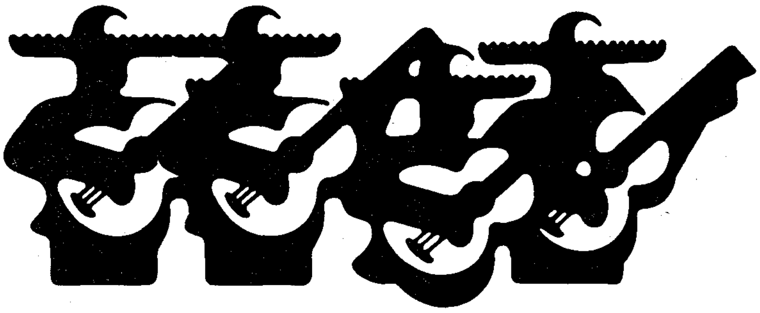

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IS there a greater theatrical adventure than a new Balanchine ballet seen for the first time? Yes: a new Balanchine ballet seen for the second time. At first, swept along at intergalactic speeds, we feel nothing but the novelty and peculiarity of it all—the sensation of being bombarded by clean particles of image and sound. And we are likely to think, as the strokes and details build up to a total impression, Why, how strange—he's never done anything like this before. But the same ballet on another night can suddenly seem entirely plausible. It loses some of its pristine atmospheric dazzle and starts to resemble other Balanchine works—works we've been comfortable with for years. When the new ballet's singular virtues and its categorizable ones are impossible to tell apart, we know that we've assimilated it, and we begin to enjoy the ballet not simply as a new event but as an integrated core expression of the company that produced it. No Balanchine ballet, no matter how tasty, is assimilable at first sight—there's too much going on. But the things that usually don't emerge until a second viewing—like structural and categorical resemblances to other ballets—can be upsetting; they can drain away newness before we've had a chance to determine the weight of it, and we know we have to go yet a third time just to see if we can balance things out. Since in New York we have the benefit of leisurely repertory seasons, we do go again, as soon as we can. Sometimes the looked-for progression of thesis-antithesis-synthesis happens right on schedule; sometimes not at all or not for years, and the ballet that is no longer a stranger to us remains at best a distant cousin of the ballets we love. We accept it for their sake, but we don't want to see it often.

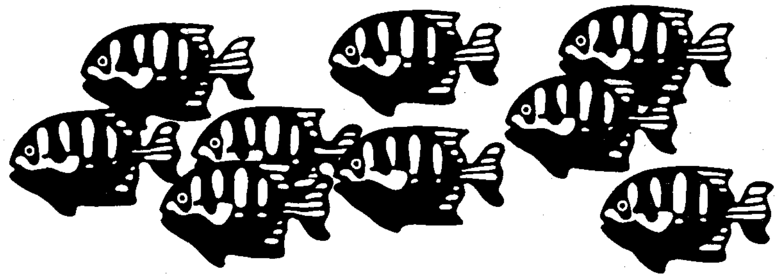
For me, the new piece called (after its Hindemith score) "Kammermusik No. 2" may become one of these estimable, avoidable ballets. I've seen it four times and found it each time a fascinating work of craft, undeniably a member of the family, but a fairly unappealing member—the kind that sets out to gain by hard work and good credit what it lacks in bloodlines. Although it belongs among those modern classical ballets danced to modern music, it seems to have married into the Stravinsky-serialism branch, which includes "Agon," "Violin Concerto," "Rubies," "Episodes," and "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," rather than to have descended from "The Four Temperaments," which is the only other Hindemith ballet in the repertory, or from "Metamorphoses," an early-fifties setting of Hindemith's "Symphonic Metamorphoses," or from any of the non-Balanchine Hindemith ballets we know about. If, next to the Stravinsky ballets, "Kammermusik No. 2" lacks depth, it certainly has a powerfully thick and busy surface. The care that Balanchine has lavished upon it suggests that he wants no light to come through. He hasn't, as he said of "The Four Temperaments," made a negative to Hindemith's positive plate; he's made another positive.

Kammermusik No. 2 was composed in 1924, about midway in the series of concertos dubbed "chamber music" by the composer, presumably because of the intimate collaboration of their relatively small ensembles. Scored for solo piano and twelve other instruments, No. 2 is nimble, brusque music, much of it moving at piston pace on irregular, rapidly shifting beats and dealing in complex canonical structures. Balanchine expresses all this and more, and he makes the tight, driving rhythms seem flexible, but the effect of his immaculate response to the music is a ballet that appears oddly closed and, in its superefficient way, defensive. Not that he hasn't a perspective on the score. He has several. One of them is cultural: his summation of the music as part of a particular place and time—Germany in the twenties. It may be pertinent that when Doris Humphrey revived her "Life of the Bee" in 1957, she staged it to the Kammermusik No. 1. This may have been a reaction to the insect pas de deux and winged finale of "Metamorphoses" (although a more noticeable correspondence to "The Life of the Bee" occurs in Jerome Robbins' "The Cage"). But I mention the Humphrey ballet because of the far larger coincidence of its period with the period of the Kammermusik and with a particular climate of design. Balanchine's "Kammermusik" portrays that music as a moment in the history of modernity. He has created a modern antique. It doesn't look anything like the naïve expressionism of Humphrey or like what one could imagine of the German modern dances that very likely inspired her. Instead, it looks like Greek folk dance—or, rather, the adaptation of that by German Hellenism. Athletic-aesthetic clubs, robust Dalcrozean youth whose energies gave rise to "Le Sacre du Printemps" before the war and to some part of the environment for "neo-classicism" afterward—these images feed what must be the most schematic music-visualization that Balanchine has done since the Bach-Webern "Ricercata" in "Episodes."

Indeed, with Bach we start another round of categorical correspondences. "Kammermusik No. 2" relates to the "Ricercata," and both are related to "Concerto Barocco." Balanchine ratifies the baroque pretensions of the Hindemith score; he capitalizes on its near-deadly pedantry. He seems to relish this involved game of all strategy and no target. Without ever getting mechanical and therefore predictable in his moves, he yet finds a visual rhyme for everything he hears: the double and triple canons cannonading between piano and orchestra are reproduced on the stage between soloists and corps; the two-part inventions for the piano are reflected in two ballerinas dancing the same or similar dances in unison or a few beats apart. "Concerto Barocco" has two ballerinas and a corps de ballet of eight girls; the corps of "Kammermusik" is eight men. Men, perhaps, are more suited than women would be to the figurative atmosphere of the piece and to its blunt, thick strokes, its metronomic austerity. This male Greek chorus is never still but always actively composing and recomposing the perimeters of the action. Spacing is tight; the men move blocklike in and out of place, one move (or so it seems) per beat. The constant shuttling keeps redefining the space. Though the atmosphere of the piece never deepens, it never dies, either; Balanchine keeps us moving inside it. And he has calculated its limited psychological range to perfection. The corps of men enforces the local, historical look (the datedness, if you like) and also a kind of ruthless anonymity that wouldn't be possible with a corps of women. ("Put sixteen girls on a stage," Balanchine has said, "and it's everybody—the world. But put sixteen boys and it's always nobody.") This ballet isn't just faceless, it's also headless. Between the two ballerinas, no one governs. The symmetry is such that one may divide the stage in half at almost any point, watch only one side and still see all. The split focus recalls parts of the last section of "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," when we seem to be watching two ballets moving toward each other like sliding mirrored doors. "Kammermusik" carries this doubleness to baffling extremes. Certainly it is motivated by the music, but isn't it unlike Balanchine to be this literal?

Balanchine choreographs his dance in twin sets and never gives us a stereoscope to look through. His ballerinas are Karin von Aroldingen and Colleen Neary, who are physically and temperamentally so dissimilar they're practically opposites. Neary has a small head, a short waist, and very long legs. In von Aroldingen, these proportions are reversed. Neary is spirited; von Aroldingen is stolid. Yet these two dancers are never used for contrast. About all they have in common are the roles of Choleric in "The Four Temperaments" and Second Ballerina in "Rubies," and their dissimilarities are no more relevant there than they are here. Balanchine seems to have cast them because they are both tall, and for no other reason. So it is with "Kammermusik." From the material he has given them and their two partners, Adam Lüders and Sean Lavery, there isn't much we can tell about Balanchine's attitude except that he's been unusually hard on von Aroldingen, giving her a fat part but, for the first time, letting her limitations show. He's noncommittal toward Lüders and Lavery, seeing to little more than that they function well in the partnering and in some brief solo bits. And he's downright cryptic about Neary. It's true that she hasn't progressed as rapidly as some others have in recent years, but mightn't this role have provided some sort of incentive? Performing for the most part in von Aroldingen's shadow, she has one witty solo passage of chaînés turned on the heels, then makes a flippant exit. It's almost the only personal moment in the ballet.

But the fact that Balanchine hasn't made the ballet a showcase for anyone in it (except maybe the corps) doesn't mean that he's made an unexpressive or devitalized piece. On the contrary. The ballet boils with precisely directed energies; it's the mirror of an impersonal yet human process, and in that respect it does resemble "The Four Temperaments." I find the process poetically inscrutable and I believe it isn't going to become less so, yet the way it's worked out and timed down to the last microsecond is something for other choreographers to study and for all of us to admire. There's an ex-



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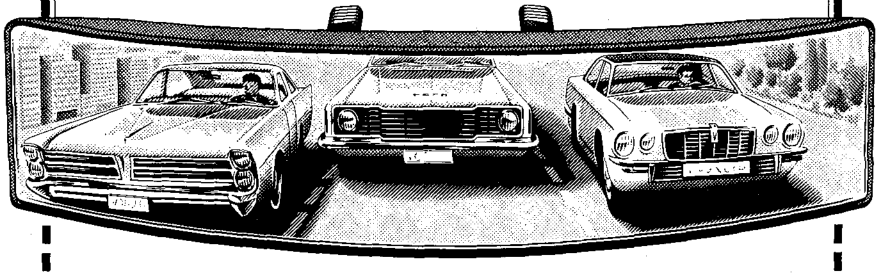

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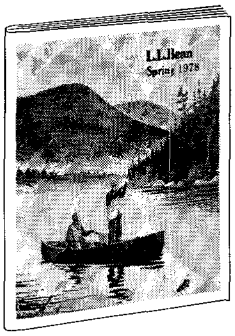

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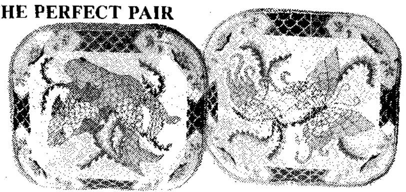

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traordinary image in the last movement of a centrifuge spinning almost out of control before order is restored. I understand there was a lot of switching of costumes before the opening night. The choice settled on football jerseys and tights for the men, with tunics falling to mid-thigh and fillet-bound hair for the women. I can't understand how it could ever have been anything else.

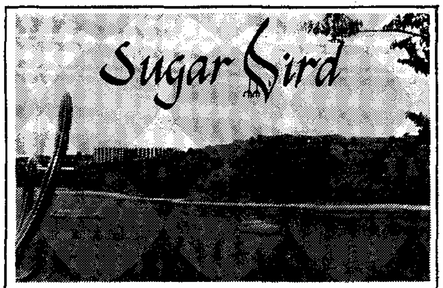
PETER MARTINS' "Calcium Light Night," which also entered the New York City Ballet repertory this season, confirmed the good impression I had of it at the preview performance. It begins as modestly as possible, with a young man walking out onto the stage and beginning to dance, as if for himself, to some selections of Charles Ives. He experiments with skids, with kicks through space; he flexes or crosses his feet and walks with a hobbled gait. In one solo, he trails along in bourrées with soft arms, as if imagining, or imagining himself, a girl. In another solo, he leaps with flashing satyr's hooves. He walks off unconcernedly and a woman walks on. As she repeats some of the steps he has just danced, she seems to be the woman he was thinking about. She has a gentle, lyrical solo, but this moment of introspection lasts little more than an arpeggio, and the barbed, militant air she then assumes seems to be more characteristic. She stalks backward on point, turns, and stalks some more. When he returns, to circle her helplessly in high leaps, the monotonous march goes on. It's the sad parade, the cirque à deux. Finally, they meet in "arguments" (though the music here is not Ives' "Arguments" but his "Hallowe'en"), a staccato, non-stop seriocomic pas de deux in which limbs become hinges and handles, bodies are clamped together, then slid apart. The choreography makes not one superfluous gesture, everything stands out with bright-edged clarity, and the flatly factual tone communicates an instantaneous emotion. Daniel Duell and Heather Watts are excellent. The stage is undressed except for a square tube of light hung overhead. The uncostumes are perhaps too severe. Miss Watts, in her crimson unitard sheared off at calf and bustline, looks like a thermometer.

—ARLENE CROCE

•

There's no bad form about tea drinking (although slurping it from the saucer is somewhat *de rigueur*).—*Linda Blandford in Quest/77.*

In our *cercle*, it's *un peu de trop.*



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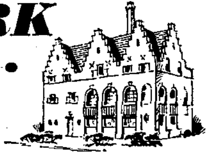

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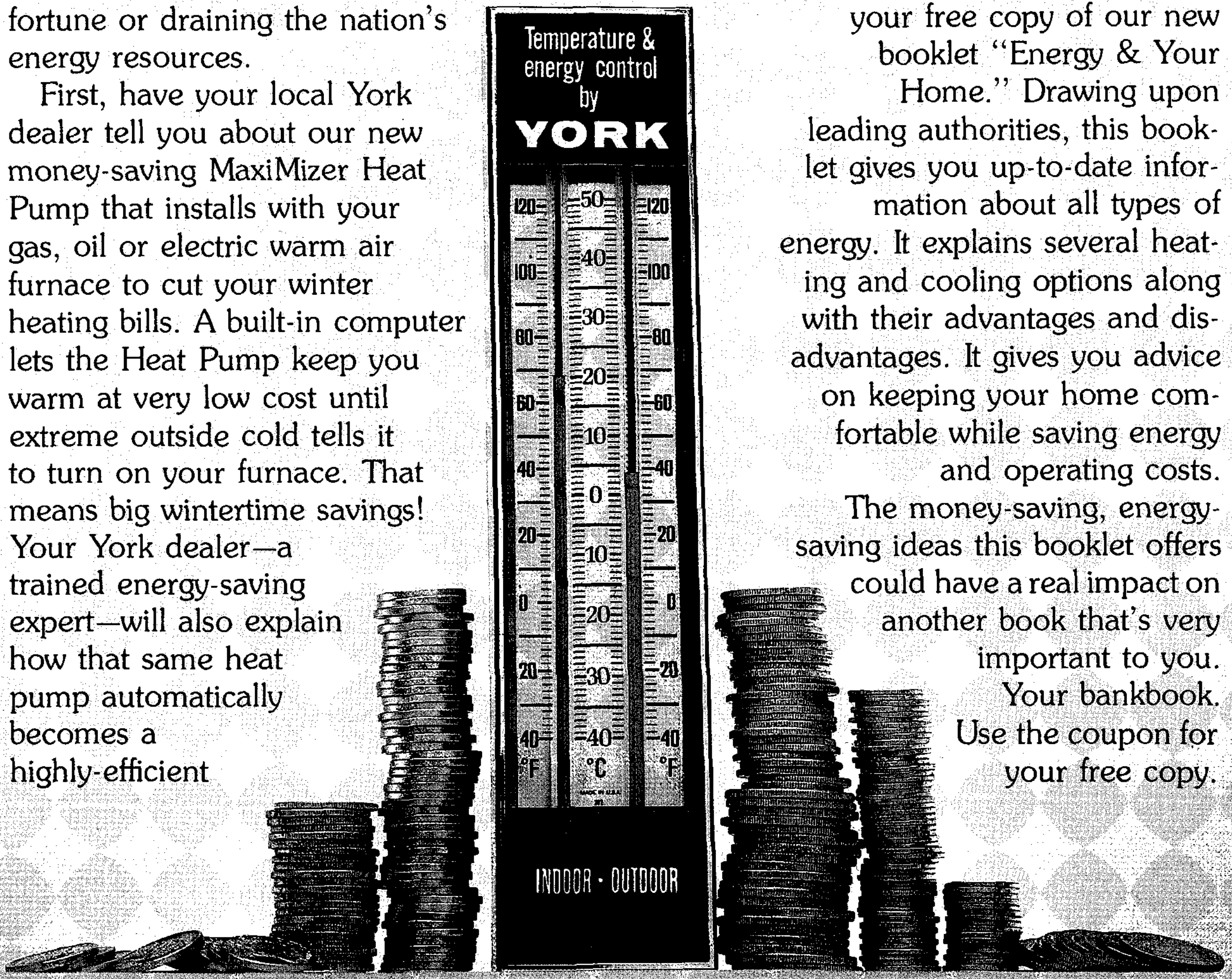

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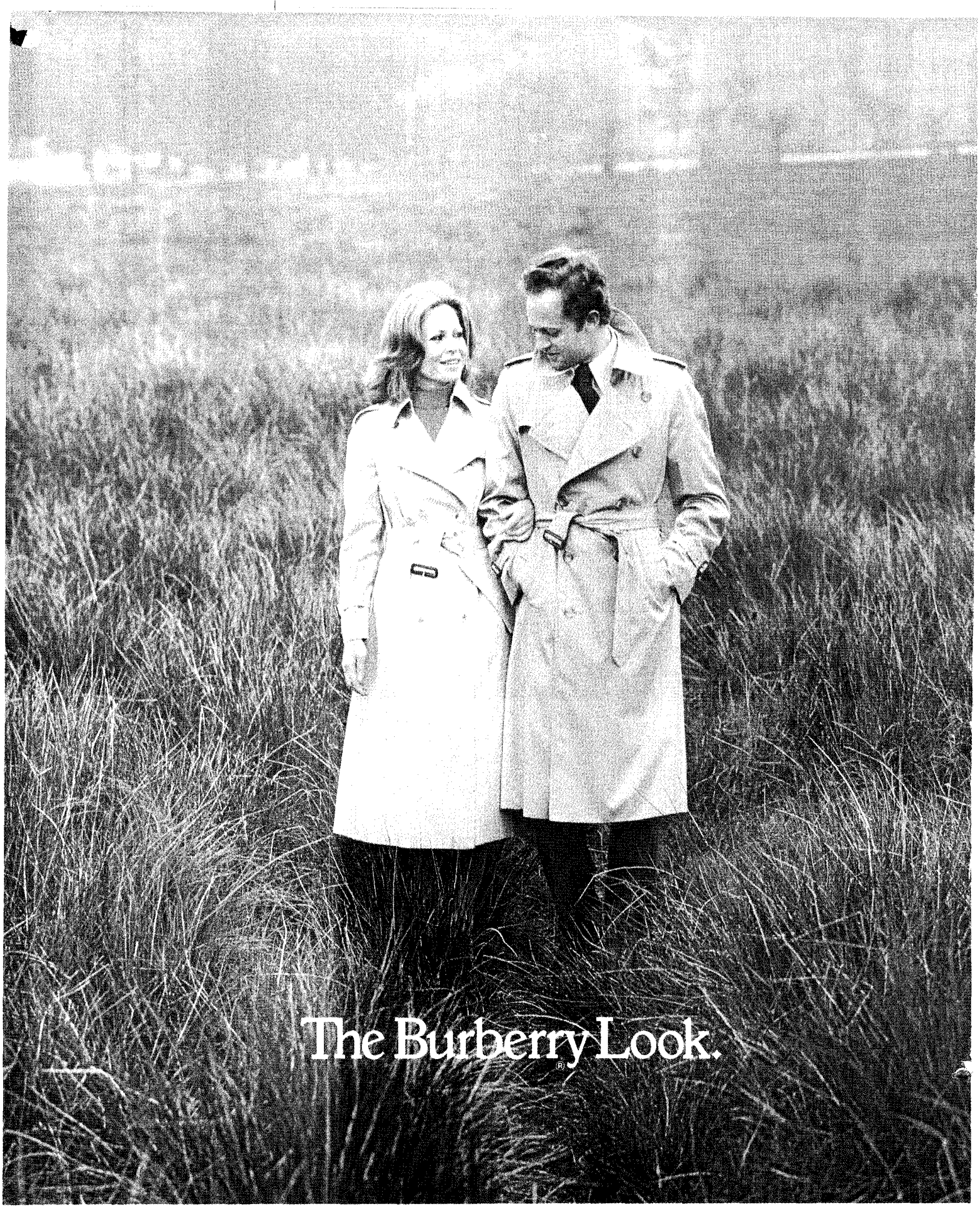

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BOOKS

Pinter's Unproduced Proust Printed

ONE approaches "The Proust Screenplay," by Harold Pinter (Grove; $10), determined not to complain that Proust's language has vanished. How could it not, given the foolhardy and fascinating idea of making a movie script of the immense "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu" (as Mr. Pinter calls it, implying that he worked from the French rather than from the C. K. Scott Moncrieff translation, "Remembrance of Things Past")? Still, one must marvel at how the playwright, a master of the laconic/elliptical/polymorphous-abrupt style of modern stagecraft, has cut this lushest of novels down from two million words to a string of four hundred and fifty-five shots, some a mere "momentary yellow screen" and others as simple as

47. MOTHER'S EYES.

Unlike John Collier's "screenplay for cinema of the mind" of "Paradise Lost," Pinter's script makes no attempt to flesh out the dialogue with descriptive writing; and, unlike the produced screen version of "Ulysses," it places no significant reliance on the author's words in voice-over; and, unlike Ingmar Bergman's published scenarios or Arthur Miller's "Misfits," it little resembles a conventional short story or novella. Indeed, I know of no other book that so uncompromisingly shows us what a film script looks like. Nor have I read another book, not even one of Beckett's, with such consciousness of the work of exclusion, of the effort the author has invested in keeping his product to this minimum. Nor, for that matter, have I hitherto reviewed a book where judgment must remain so definitely suspended, where so much of the proof resides in a deferred pudding. The script was completed, Pinter's introduction states, in 1972. "We then all tried to get the money to make the film. Up to this point the film has not been made." Until that point is passed, we cannot know whether such a passage as the following is absurd or superb:

367. EXT. GRAND CANAL. VENICE. DAY. 1903.

> *Wintery, desolate.* MARCEL *in a gondola approaching a palazzo.*

368. MOTHER FRAMED IN A WINDOW.

> *She is sitting on a balcony of the palazzo reading.*
> *She looks up from her book to see* MARCEL *in the gondola.*

369. THE GONDOLA ARRIVING AT THE LANDING.

> MARCEL *steps out of the gondola, looks up to see his mother. His face is expressionless.*

370. C.U. MOTHER.

> *She looks down with an expression of helpless love.*

A great deal of expressionlessness is called for by the scenarist, and we can entertain a suspicion that the most fervent and admiring first-person narrator in twentieth-century fiction has been turned into a surly stick. Witness:

151. THE CARRIAGE.

> GRANDMOTHER
> What are you looking at, Marcel?
> MARCEL (*turning*)
> Nothing.
> MME. DE VILLEPARISIS
> Have I missed something?
> MARCEL
> No.

152. CLOSE SHOT. FLOWERS ON CLIFF TOP.

> *Boats on the horizon.*
> *A butterfly flutters between the flowers.*
> GISÈLE (*V.O.*)
> Aren't you eating any sandwiches?

153. EXT. THE CLIFF TOP. BALBEC. DAY.

> *The little band of* GIRLS: ALBERTINE (*18*), ANDRÉE (*20*), GISÈLE, ROSEMONDE, *and* DELPHINE (*all 17*), *with* MARCEL, *sitting with a picnic. Hampers, etc. At the edge of the field, bicycles.*
> MARCEL
> No. I prefer this.
> ALBERTINE
> What is it exactly?
> MARCEL
> A chocolate cake.
> *Silence. They all munch.*
> ALBERTINE
> Don't you actually *like* sandwiches?
> MARCEL
> Not very much.
> *Silence.*

But until we can see the actors and hear their voices, feast our eyes on the wide-screen sea, and enjoy what the propmen have made of "Hampers, etc." and those fin-de-siècle bicycles, we cannot be certain how we will feel about the hero's solemn disdain of sandwiches. In the interim (which may be forever), "The Proust Screenplay" can be read as one more of the slim devotional volumes that men of diverse genius have been moved to offer up to Proust—"Proust's Way," by François Mauriac, "Proust's Binoculars," by Roger Shattuck, "Proust," by Samuel Beckett, "On Proust," by Jean-François Revel, "The Magic Lantern of Marcel Proust," by Howard Moss. Like all these, Pinter's unproduced script affords us the pleasure of having our memory of "Remembrance of Things Past" refreshed, and provides yet another angle of perception upon a work so elaborate and many-faceted it never fails to give back new light.

One effect of casting the novel into scenario form has been suggested: the narrator, Marcel, deposed as verbal creator and enlisted as a dramatic character among many, becomes sullen, petulant, precariously unsympathetic, and even stupid. His behavior, pried loose from the matrix of his splendid philosophizing about behavior, seems more neurotic than we remember. His treatment of Albertine, especially, shocks us in Pinter's rendition: "MARCEL: Albertine, I think we should part. I want you to leave, first thing in the morning. ALBERTINE: In the morning? MARCEL: We have been happy. Now we're unhappy. It's quite simple. ALBERTINE: I'm not unhappy. MARCEL: Never see me again. It's best. ALBERTINE: You are the only person I care for. MARCEL: I've always wanted to go to Venice. Now I shall go. Alone." This dialogue has been clipped from a passage in the long, long middle of "The Captive," where Marcel tirelessly revolves his jealous imaginings about the enigmatic passivity of his captive mistress; his suggestion that she leave is couched "with a profound gentleness and melancholy" that Pinter's lines leave to the actor's discretion, and the whole dismissal is in Marcel's hyperactive mind a piece of playful sadism, a pretense: "This fictitious parting scene ended by causing me almost as much grief as if it had been real, possibly because one of the actors, Albertine, by believing it to be real, had enhanced the other's illusion." As the novel frames the case, it is Albertine who is resolved on escaping, and the narrator's cruelties are pathetic maneuvers to forestall her. In the Pinter version, Marcel, drained of the child's vulnerability and sexual tentativeness that he carries through the novel, becomes—with kissing closeups and bare-shouldered bed scenes—a standard cinema stud, a stag at bay in the woods of sexual freedom, a trapped lover tossing over his latest dolly. Elsewhere, too, the novel's substance seems coarsened as well as condensed. Saint-Loup would not breezily introduce his friend to his mistress with "This is Marcel. Marcel—Rachel." Albertine would not, and *did* not, say in her rhapsody on flavored ices, "I'll swallow them up, so cool, cool, cool." The Duchesse, at her most offhand, would not pronounce "Which reminds me" as a sentence in itself. She is made to say it, as a hasty and slangy transition, in a scene that, transcribed from the magnificent tragicomic farewell to Swann which concludes "The Guermantes Way," illustrates the perhaps unavoidable loss of ironic and poetic timbre:

> Charles! Marcel! How delightful. What a pity we have to go out. Dining out is such a bore. There are evenings when one would sooner die. But perhaps dying is an even greater bore, who knows?

This last remark, addressed to an old friend who is about to die, seemed so crude I looked up its counterpart in the Scott Moncrieff translation, and found it little, but significantly, different:

> "Oh, my dear Charles," she went on, "what a bore it can be, dining out. There are evenings when one would sooner die! It is true that dying may be perhaps just as great a bore, because we don't know what it's like."

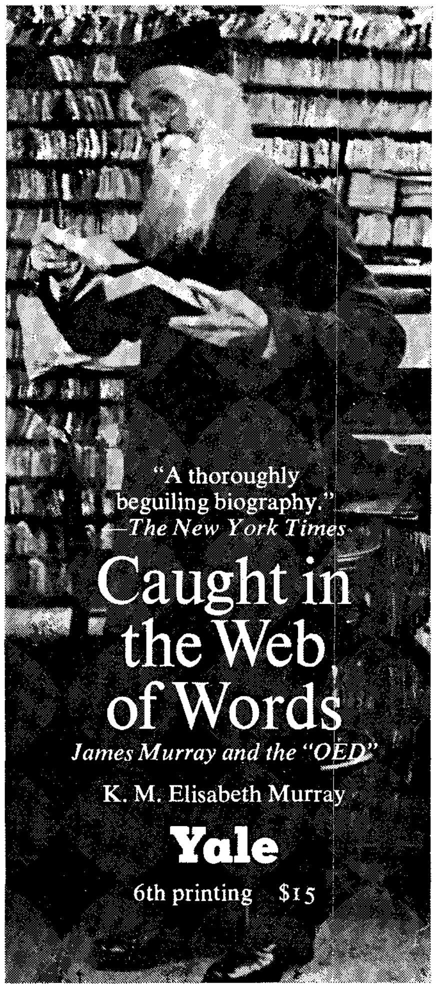
This is lamer than, but faithful enough to, the French:

> *"Ah! mon petit Charles," reprit Mme de Guermantes, "ce que ça peut être ennuyeux de dîner en ville! Il y a des soirs où on aimerait mieux mourir! Il est vrai que de mourir c'est peut-être tout aussi ennuyeux puisqu'on ne sait pas ce que c'est."*

In Proust, she is giddily "going on," with a fluffy self-absorption that Pinter's crisp cadences do not convey. Throughout this adaptation, not only the exigencies of the film medium but a stylistic habit and preference compress the dialogue. Pinter's characters are on the attack with every phrase, "at" each other, alert for advantage; Proust's dialogue is often an intersection of monologues, conveying with comic amplitude our deafness to one another amid the vanity of our pretensions and the lonely immensity of musing space we each of us harbor. The entire reverie of "Remembrance of Things Past" pours out of such a private space; having lifted Marcel up from the stream of analysis and description, Pinter has a troublesome nonentity on his hands. Until the rather tritely dramatic Albertine episode, the hero does little but witness, usually without expression. A witnessing narrator is a most convenient instrument for fiction, but in the movies he gets between the camera and the action, like the dreary Mastroianni character in "La Dolce Vita." We think of Mastroianni's limpid eyes, wet and black as those of a seal waiting to be tossed a fish, when we try to visualize *MARCEL'S EYES*. And one sequence suggests a slide show at an ophthalmologists' convention:

> *345. MARCEL'S EYES.*
>
> *346. THE EYES OF GILBERTE AT TANSONVILLE.*
>
> *347. THE EYES OF THE DUCHESSE DE GUERMANTES IN THE STREET.*
>
> *348. THE EYES OF ODETTE IN THE AVENUE DES ACACIAS.*
>
> *349. THE EYES OF MOTHER IN THE BEDROOM AT COMBRAY.*
>
> *350. THE EYES OF MARCEL IN THE LAVATORY AT COMBRAY.*
>
> *351. THE EYES OF MARCEL.*

But for this scenario, we might not realize how compressible the finespun plot of "Remembrance of Things Past" is. Though he has eliminated Bergotte and Elstir, Bloch and the famous madeleine, Pinter has found space—or footage—for almost everything else, including Marcel's passingly mentioned stay in a sanatorium, and the "Marquise" stationed at the lavatory in the Champs-Élysées. He has retained a galaxy of characters, including such double stars as Marcel/Swann, Mother/Grandmother, and Albertine/Gilberte. Minor figures like the Prince de Foix and the Duc de Châtellerault make cameo appearances, and Saint-Loup, a fluttering ghost of his extensive prose version, materializes long enough to do his gallant dance along the back of the bench at the Rivebelle restaurant and to leave his Croix de Guerre in Jupien's male brothel. "Great Moments from 'Remembrance of Things Past,'" this film might be called, or "This Is Your Life, Marcel." The all-inclusive strategy, with its peril of indecipherable clutter, was deliberate. Pinter in his introduction tells how he consulted, in forming his script, with Joseph Losey, the prospective director, and Barbara Bray, a British editor and translator from the French. "We decided that the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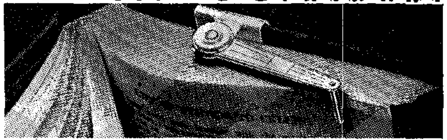
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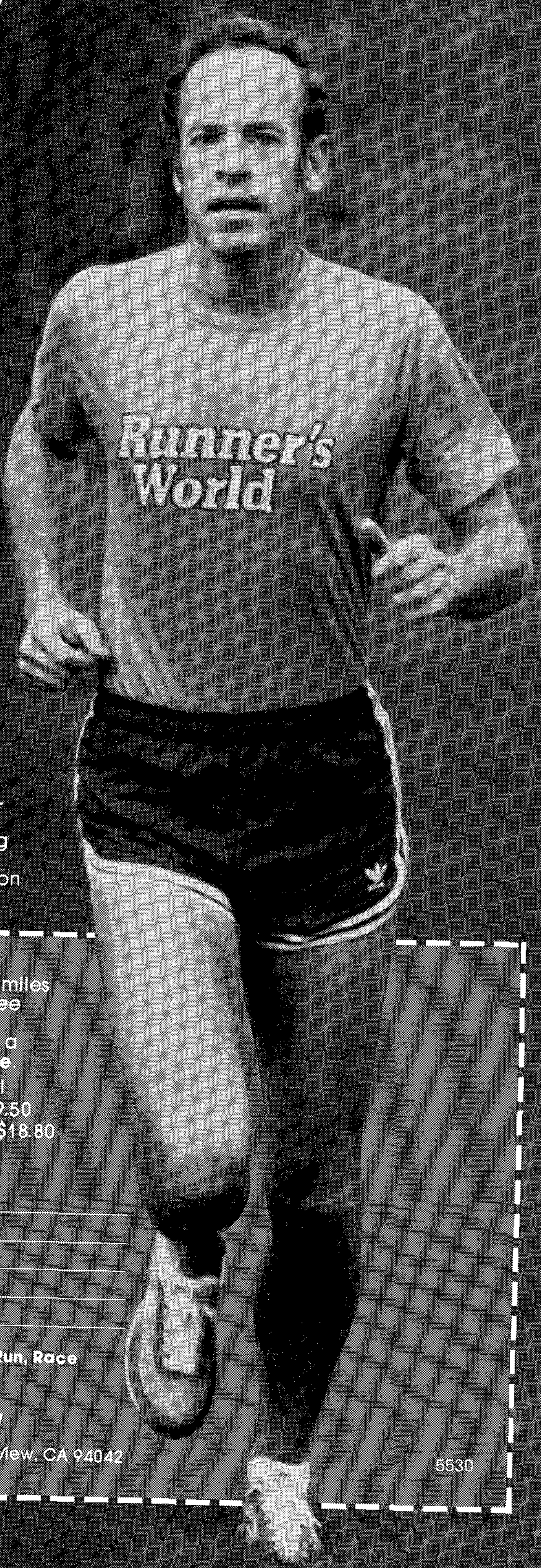

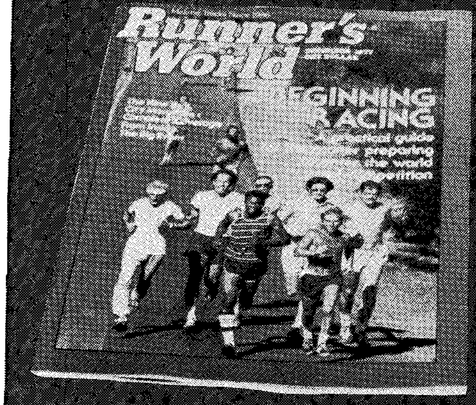

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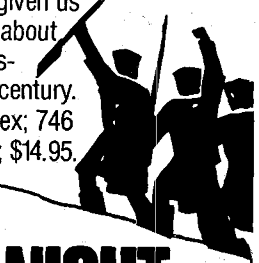

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architecture of the film should be based on two main and contrasting principles: one, a movement, chiefly narrative, toward disillusion, and the other, more intermittent, toward revelation, rising to where time that was lost is found, and fixed forever in art." And so Marcel's rise in society, and society's collapse into homosexuality and vapidity, are observed scene by scene, notch by notch, like the growth and death of a plant telescoped into visible motion by stop-frame photography. Whether or not the progress thus telescoped would seem more than a comically spasmodic jumble of eyes, faces, and snipped allusions depends, as they say, on the execution.

Much of the emotional continuity would have to be supplied by the actor who plays Marcel, as he handles such supernatural assignments as registering the differences between Shot 140, "*MARCEL'S FACE*," and Shot 143, "*MARCEL'S FACE, ALIVE*." More difficult still is the embodiment in the film of the idea of art as life-justifying, and the extraordinary literary involution whereby the massive work we have just read is shown, at its end, in the triumphant moment of conception. Here, though I doubt if Marcel in the cliché role of blocked writer ("To be honest, I have wasted my life") will come across, Pinter has conceived some fine effects of montage. The three steeples seen from Martinville, the magic-lantern image of Geneviève de Brabant, the hawthorn hedge along "Swann's way" all appear and reappear. The blue mosaics of San Marco in Venice give way to the searchlighted sky of wartime Paris. The film would open with a blank yellow screen, which the camera, amid the flashing of remembered moments, reveals as the "little patch of yellow wall" in Vermeer's "View of Delft." It is this painting that the ailing Bergotte, the novel's symbolic representative of literature, ventures out to see; having seen it, he dies, envisioning "in a celestial balance . . . his own life, while the other contained the little patch of wall so beautifully painted in yellow." The object of Bergotte's pathetic—and, like so much in Proust, not unfarcical—sacrifice of life for art becomes, mingled with the sound of the Combray garden bell and the music of Vinteuil, the alpha and omega of "The Proust Screenplay," its core of radiance. The cameraman, of course, will have to locate the little yellow patch (Proust misidentified it as from "A Street in Delft," when in fact the painting that he and Bergotte saw in Paris, on loan from the Mau-

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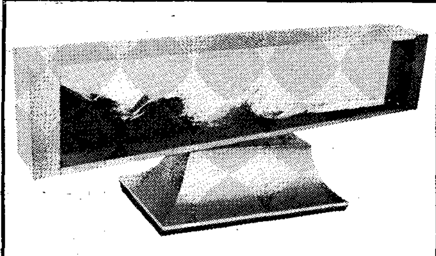

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ritshuis to the Jeu de Paume for an exhibit of Dutch painting in 1921, was the larger "View of Delft," which contains a number of sunlit roofs and walls), and the music director will have to write Vinteuil's sonata and septet, or else steal them from Debussy or César Franck. Still, one's heart quickens in anticipation of the collaboration. There is in Proust's method a reblending of narrative music and image that does suggest the cinematic art, an art come to ripeness in the same years as his masterpiece, which is so cheerfully imbued with the revisions of human sensibility occasioned by such inventions as the telephone, the motorcar, the airplane, and the camera. By trying to capture this affinity, Harold Pinter has subjugated his talent to a brave and beautiful attempt at translation, and made a supreme gesture of faith in the film medium, trusting it to receive this most luxuriously verbal of prose fictions. His script, produced, would certainly have delightful evocative, mnemonic qualities for the committed Proustians in the audience. But could the movie be comprehended and enjoyed by anyone who had not read the book?

REVIEWER (*circumspectly*)
One wonders.
MARCEL (*expressionless*)
No way.

—JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

AT GOD'S PLEASURE, by Jean d'Ormesson, translated from the French by Barbara Bray (Knopf; $10.95). Though the publisher calls it a novel, this is really a memoir about the decline and fall of the author's old, aristocratic French family (they trace their lineage back to the Middle Ages) and the three-hundred-and-sixty-five-bedroom château in Plessis-lez-Vaudreuil, in the Haute-Sarthe, where they have disported themselves for the last several centuries. Not a particularly historically reliable memoir ("I imagine the dinner in question must have been in about 1928. Perhaps nearer 1926. Or nearer 1929. I think it must have been 1926"), but one that is evocative, full of famous names—several Wittgensteins, Proust, and de Gaulle, among others—and rather touchingly nostalgic. It is also more than a little long-winded and musty, possibly because of a thirty-six-year gestation period. Despite these flaws, and the author's bewildering de-

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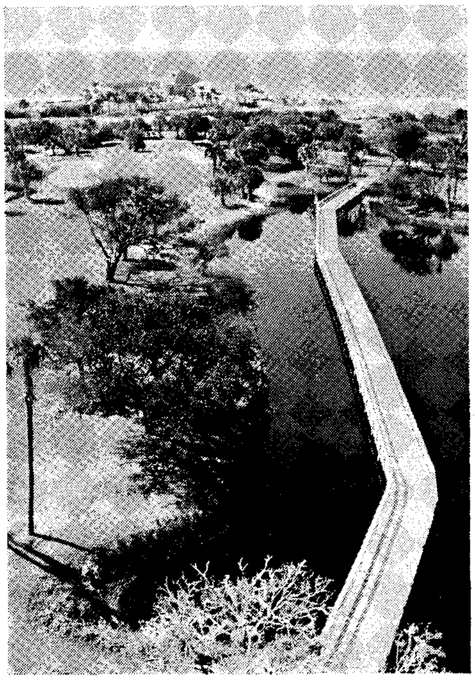

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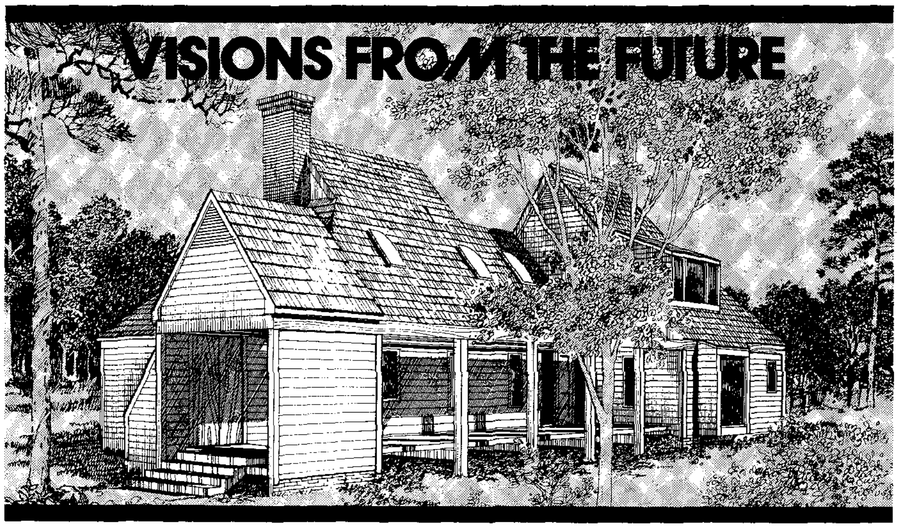

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termination to keep himself completely out of the story, the book affords a rare closeup look at a vanished world of passionately familial, always elegant, often decadent, frequently ignorant, merry, and lazy monarchists who will be no more.

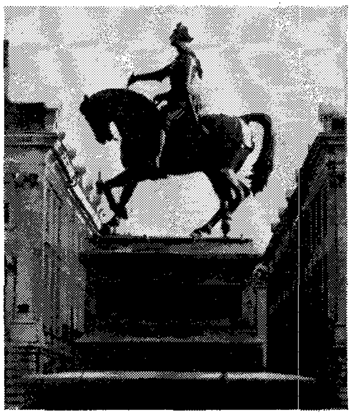
GENERAL

1066: THE YEAR OF THE CONQUEST, by David Howarth (Viking; $10.95). Mr. Howarth opens this model of scholarly popular history with a pastoral portrait of a Sussex village called Horstede at the beginning of 1066, and ends it with an elegiac after-glance at its remains at the close of that dramatic year. It is an inspired device, and one that reminds us that the cataclysmic events of the intervening months—the death of Edward the Confessor and the coronation of Harold; the stunned and raging cry from William of Normandy that the crown had been promised to him; the lying blandishments of the insane and outcast Earl of Northumbria, which excited the bloodthirsty Harald of Norway to invade England; the Battle of Stamford Bridge; the papal intrigue that gave William the Pope's banner; the miraculous out-of-season crossing of the Channel; the strange paralysis of Harold at Hastings; the Norman tidal wave that literally dispossessed the English nation—were conceived and lived by human beings. Mr. Howarth's approach is rational, and his assumptions are confirmed by the accepted sources, but the familiar story loses nothing of its power to haunt and stir and strangely mystify. Illustrated with drawings by Gareth Floyd, and maps.

THE FALLEN COLOSSUS, by Robert Sobel (Weybright & Talley; $15). An attempt—and at times a rather higgledy-piggledy one—to explain in non-academic terms why the merging of two gigantic undertakings (the New York Central Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad) came such a catastrophic cropper. It was a cropper whose effects upon the viability of such already nearly unviable cities as New York, as well as upon the social and industrial viability of a thousand smaller communities, has not yet become fully apparent to a great many of us. It was, furthermore, a cropper that may soon have a counterpart—and an equally unhappy one—in the railway industry in the Midwest. (The bankruptcy last December of the Milwaukee, a line reaching all the way from Chicago to the northwest Pacific Coast, is undoubtedly merely the opening act.) "Fallen Colossus" is hardly as sharply focussed on its basic topic as is "Wreck of the Penn Central," by Joseph Daughen and Peter Binzen (1971), but it ranges much further back, to the beginnings of railways in this country, and it looks forward in some perplexity (justifiably) to what happens next to the industry. A revealing book for citizens who wish to discover why getting themselves and their goods from one place to another in this country has become so often haphazard, so often expensive. In it, readers will meet the entrepreneurs, the legislators, the lobbyists, the bankers, the state and federal commissioners, the politicians, the accountants, the stockbrokers, the wheeler-dealers, and the well-intentioned theorists who made all this possible.

GRASSROOTS: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE MCGOVERN (Random House; $12.50). This interesting political memoir is a work of self-justification: the Democratic nominee of 1972 wishes to correct misapprehensions about himself and his policies which, he believes, may have cost him the Presidency. He demonstrates, on the basis of his record in the House and Senate, that he has been neither a wild-eyed radical nor an impractical dreamer. He also reminds us that his accomplishments have included not only legislative experience but the traditional qualification for the Presidency: successful administrative service, both as the Executive Secretary of the Democratic Party of South Dakota (1953-56) and as the head of Food for Peace (1961-62). Senator McGovern admits that he made mistakes during the 1972 campaign, and thinks his most serious blunder was his reaction to the discovery that his Vice-Presidential nominee had concealed a history of mental illness.

JUST AND UNJUST WARS: A MORAL ARGUMENT WITH HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS, by Michael Walzer (Basic Books; $15). The author, a professor of government at Harvard, is seeking moral formulations for people like him, who are not absolute pacifists but who do not regard war as an activity apart from—or beyond—ethical judgment. Walzer goes at the intellectual task he has set himself with courage and perseverance. He dis-



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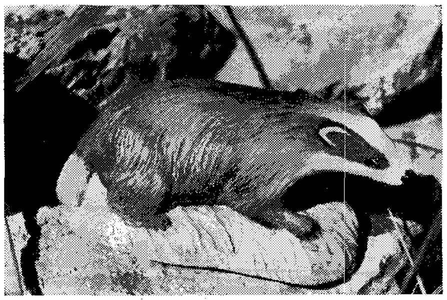

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cusses ethical reasons for going to war and ethical norms for the conduct of war. He demands that we think about what actually happens in war—what besieging armies have done to civilians trapped in cities, say, and the behavior and fates of various groups of partisans—and these concrete instances remind us very vividly that, even in a noble cause, war is brutal. Walzer hopes that his work demonstrates the possibility of restraint: the possibility that wars can be waged without men doing their very worst. His style is admirably clear.

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE LITTLE PEOPLE, by Nancy Arrowsmith and George Moorse (Hill & Wang; $10). There are seventy-nine entries in this apparently straight-faced book about the "lineage, habitat, appearance, and general characteristics" of elves. To help the reader, who might be understandably overwhelmed by so many descriptions of Alven, Fylgiar, Ellefolk, Church Grims, Red Caps, Tree Elves, Bwciod, and Follets, not to mention the more everyday Hobgoblins, Leprechauns, Goat People, and Hey-Hey Men, the authors divided their treatise into three sections: Light Elves, Dark Elves, and Dusky Elves. The first, they say, are "masters at shape-changing;" the second live in the earth and "only appear at noon or late at night;" and the last, and most numerous, group are homebodies, who "rarely travel far from their native tree, herb, brook, mound or pond." Miss Arrowsmith (or Mr. Moorse) writes about this subject with an imperturbable seriousness, upbraids those cynics who "no longer have the ability to see elves with our children's or seers' eyes," and recommends her book—as we do—to all "people who want to rediscover elves."

NOTE: Jane Kramer's "The Last Cowboy," a portrait of a modern ranch hand in the New Southwest, has been published by Harper & Row ($8.95). All the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

•

Civiletti said he regarded as "exaggerated fiction" the notion that there is a national criminal organization under the direction, control and supervision of a central leadership.

Instead, he likened organized criminals to a group of men's wear retailers who meet once a year at a convention and maintain loose ties.—*Denver Post.*

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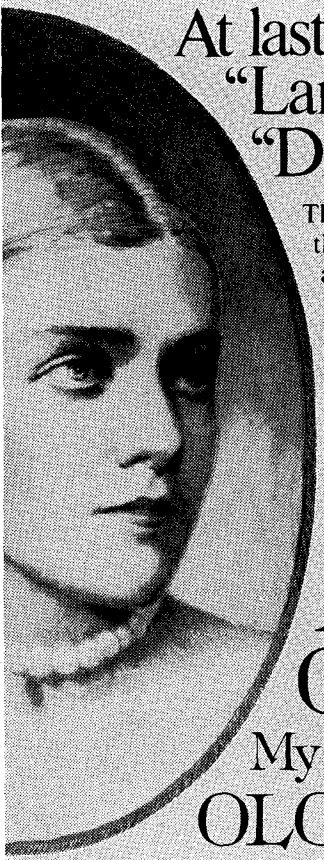

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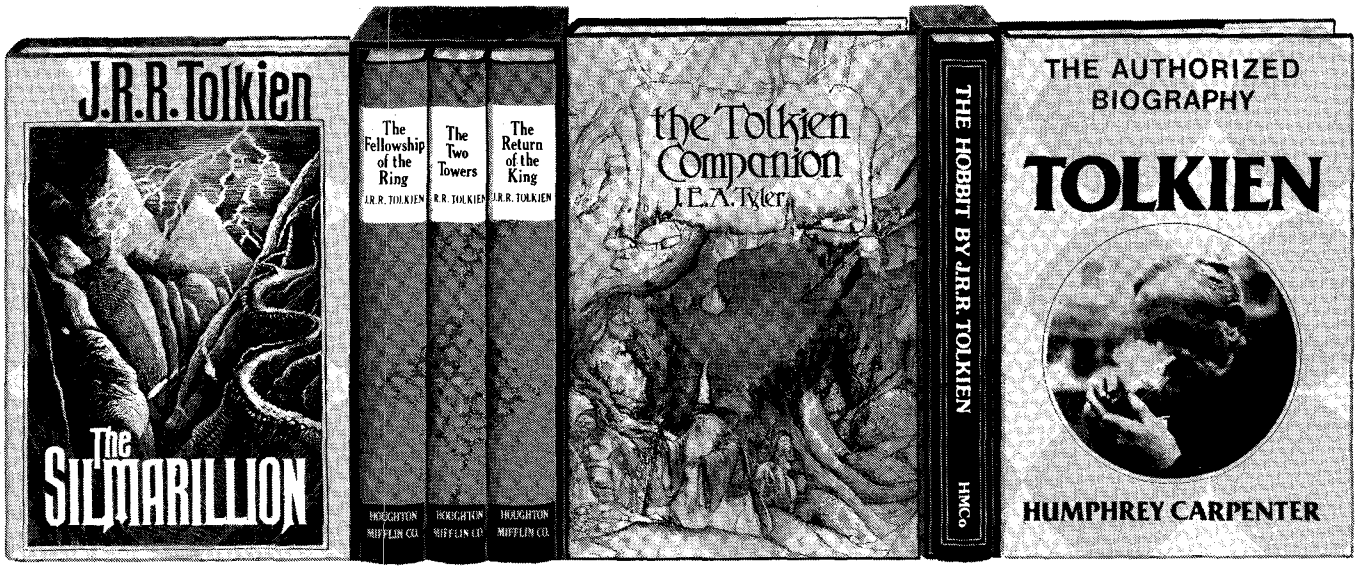

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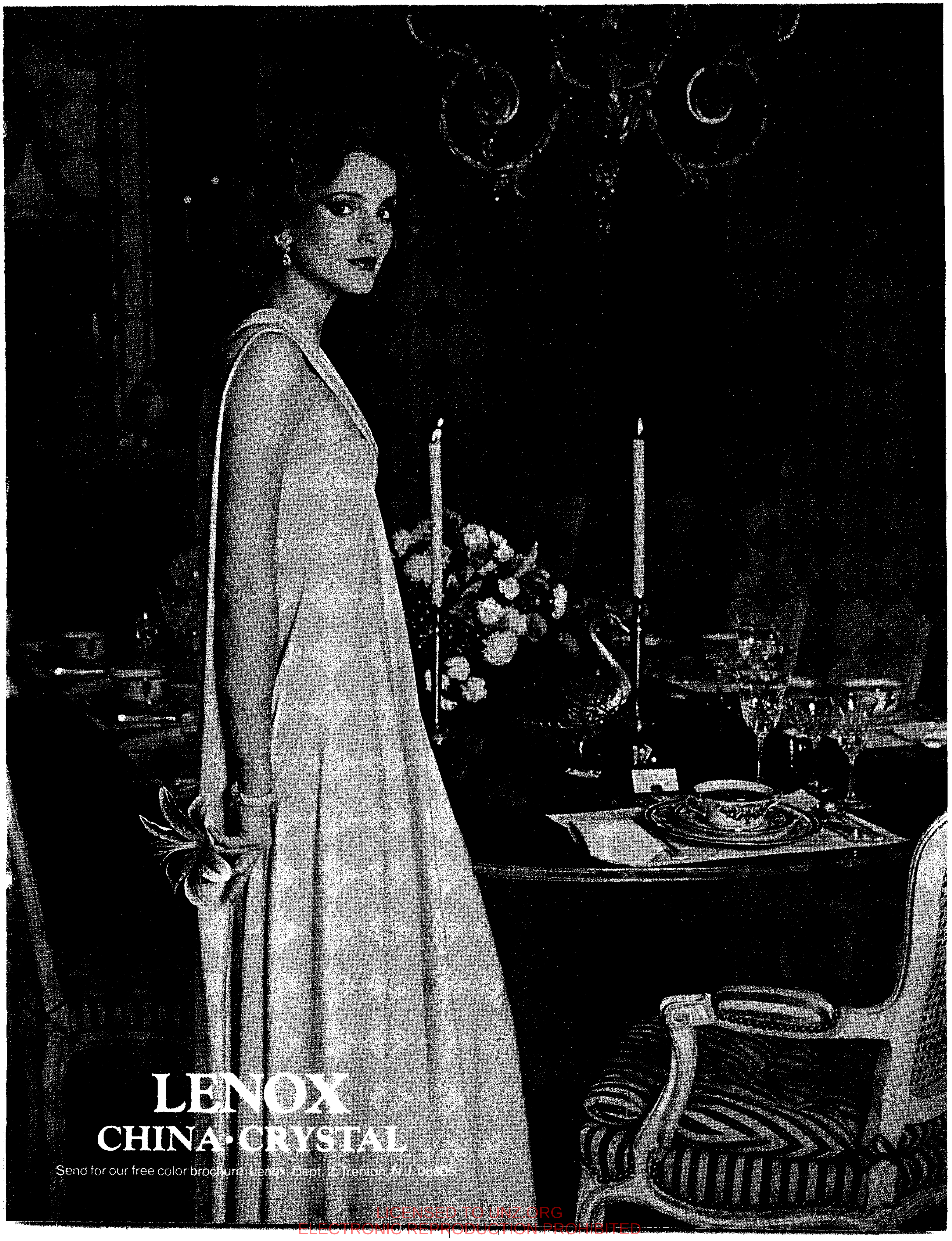
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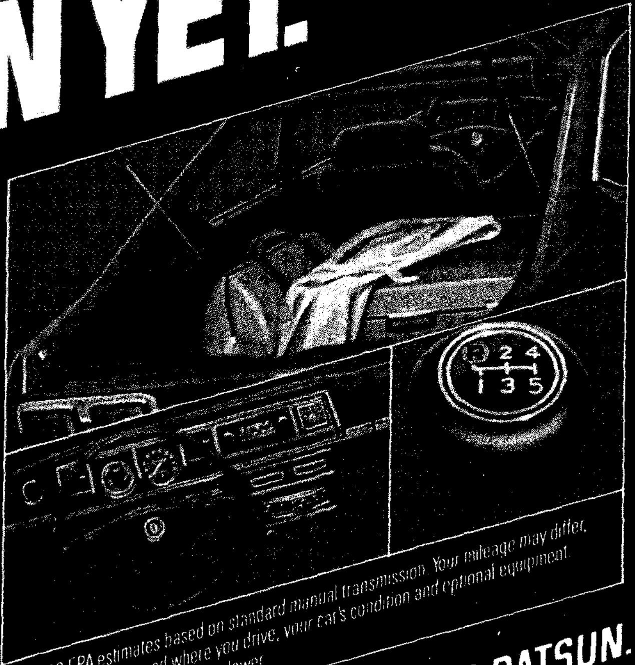

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